

Schreuder, P. J. van der H.,-

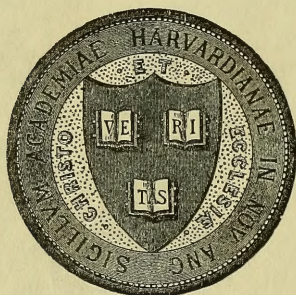
The Cape horse.

D

(1915)



HARVARD UNIVERSITY.



LIBRARY

OF THE

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOÖLOGY

47.336

GIFT OF

*Harvard college library.*

*November 10, 1917.*



NOV 10 1917

47.336

# THE CAPE HORSE

*Its Origin, Breeding and Development*

*in the*

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

A THESIS

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

PIETER JURIAAN VAN DER HEYDE SCHREUDER B. A. (CAPE)

Standerton, Transvaal, U. S. A.







NOV 10 1917

# THE CAPE HORSE

*Its Origin, Breeding and Development*

*in the*

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

A THESIS

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY FOR THE DEGREE OF

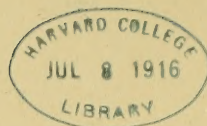
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

PIETER JURIAAN VAN DER HEYDE SCHREUDER B. A. (CAPE)

Standerton, Transvaal, U. S. A.





*Cornell University Library*

*23 Oct. 1917.*

*Transferred to  
Museum of Comp. Zoology.*

The Author wishes to express his indebtedness to Professor Merritt W. Harper of the Animal Husbandry Department in the New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University and to Professor Dr. Arthur Golf, Professor of "Koloniale Viehzucht Landwirtschaftliche Institut an der Universität zu Leipzig."



## CONTENTS.

The Cape Horse, Its Origin, Breeding and Development in the  
Union of South Africa.

---

### CHAPTER I.

#### HISTORY OF HORSE BREEDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

- (a) Its Origin.
  - (b) Its Development.
  - (c) Its Decline.
  - (b) Present Time.
- 

### CHAPTER II.

#### METHODS OF BREEDING AND MANAGEMENT

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CAPE HORSE

- (a) Its Characteristics.
  - (b) On the Race Course.
  - (c) Its Diseases.
  - (d) Distribution.
- 

### CHAPTER IV.

#### VARIOUS TYPES OF THE CAPE HORSE

- (a) In the Four Provinces.
  - (b) The Basuto Pony and Namaqua Pony.
  - (c) What Type to Breed.
- 

### CHAPTER V.

#### THE ECONOMICAL STATUS OF THE HORSE IN SOUTH AFRICAN FARMING

#### CONCLUSIONS



## INTRODUCTION

The horse is the aristocrat of the Animal Kingdom. He traces his ancestry not only to the beginning of the Christian era but far back to prehistoric times—his genealogical tree is writ large and clear on the sands of Time.

He has been man's best friend from the beginning of his existence and still claims his best affections and attentions to-day.

All history profane and sacred attests the solicitude of mankind for breeding, rearing and possession of the horse. He is endeared to man from infancy—the child has his rocking horse and he advances to the proud possession of his pony, hunter and pair.

He has been identified with almost all that relates to human life. To study his origin, breeding, management and improvement is most profitable, important and pleasant.

The horse is to-day the foundation on which rests the agricultural wealth of the greatest nations of the world.

In the life of the South African people the horse has played a great part.

He was the first domestic animal imported to the southern shores of the dark continent by the white man and both were new comers. The history of both therefore is very intimately linked.

It was in the Autumn (April) of 1652 that two small fleets of sailing vessels from the East and the West crossed the Cape of Good Hope. The one from the West brought the white man and western civilization and the one from the East, horses from the Orient.

Since that date horse breeding has become one of the developing factors of the new country. The stock was improved by fresh importations from the Orient and England, and it developed to great efficiency and fame towards the middle of last century, when a rapid decline set in, culminating in the disasters of the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902.

According to historical sequence, new eras generally follow radical changes and disasters. After the war Briton and Boer settled down to rebuild and reconstruct what they had destroyed in a foolish war. The supposed barriers to progress and unity were



battered down. The erstwhile arenas of dissension, destructive wars and commercialism were united into the Union of South Africa in 1910.

In the wake of the changes brought about by the war followed new ideas and enterprises. There was a great back-to-the-land movement. The magic spell cast over the people by the world's richest gold and diamond mines was broken, and the wealth of the upper inches of a rich and productive soil and all its possibilities was realized with a new zest.

Certain of the pastoral industries commanded the world's markets while others needed more attention, and one at least required almost total rehabilitation, that is horse breeding.

In order to do this a thorough knowledge of the past history of the industry and breed is essential.

To add to this knowledge is the purpose of this thesis. The subject is perhaps beyond the scope of a work of this kind, but any attempt to know more about an industry which has once been a source of great national wealth but has been partly destroyed through various causes, would undoubtedly be of great help in the reconstruction of this branch of our farming.

Since the war South Africa and especially the Union has entered into a new era of progress and prosperity, and to expand and solidify this every branch of farming industry must be placed on sure and efficient foundations, and no foundation is worth more attention, care and intelligence than our horse stock.

In this thesis prominence has been given to some of the best authorities on the question. Following the great historical fact that similar causes will have similar effects we can take many valuable lessons from the past to guide us in the reconstruction work of the future, bearing in mind that what has been done in the past can be done again.

This monograph is by no means an exhaustive work, and aims at nothing more than an honest and first attempt to collect between two covers some of the large amount of scattered material on a subject which deserves better attention in the ever-expanding pastoral and agricultural activity of the Union of South Africa even of the Continent of Africa.

Yonder in the dusk lies the twilight Continent of Africa; for ages she has been claimed by selfishness, commercialism and barbar-



ism. Christianity, commerce and civilization dispute this claim. Will it be the twilight of sunset or sunrise? Much depends on the progress and advancement of Southern Africa with her boundless possibilities linking up the continent with her great schemes of railway extension.

The enterprise of the British, the tenacity of the Dutch with the refining influence of their French and methodical business habits of their Teutonic ancestors act and react upon one another and will ultimately produce a race and country second to none. (Fuller).

Not only South Africa but all Africa with its wonderful resources is a country of the future.

P. J. V. D. H. SCHREUDER.

Cosmopolitan Club,  
Ithaca, N. Y.,  
23rd March, 1915.



## CHAPTER I.

### HISTORY OF HORSE BREEDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

#### (a) ITS ORIGIN.

---

*“There is always something new from Libya (Africa).”—Aristotle.*

---

In most of the great works on the horse, the Cape Horse has briefly been alluded to as possessing a strong strain of Oriental blood into which Spanish blood and later English blood has been infused; that he possessed great stamina, hardness and endurance, but was lacking in size, conformity and beauty.<sup>1</sup>

Experts and great breeders at home are agreed that the Cape Horse reached its highest point of development and efficiency toward the middle of the last century, but that since then a gradual decline has set in and the good quality of the stock has deteriorated.

The Cape Horse in the palmy days of its existence and to a very limited extent to-day shows very distinctive elements and characteristics in its inheritance. These hereditary qualities have never been traced satisfactorily, and in rehabilitating our horse stock too little attention has been paid to this very important factor, and in the attempt to reform to the old efficient and very excellent type and to regain the reputation and high standard of half a century ago, the deteriorated stock has been harmed to a further extent by unintelligent cross breeding and bad selection.

A knowledge, therefore, of the Cape Horse's lineage and of the several strains that united in producing the best type is indispensable and a first necessity.

It would not be necessary perhaps to go into much detail on the original stock from which, it is contended, the Cape Horse sprung; but it would be well to make use of such facts and conjectures, taken from the vast domain of research, as would throw light on a subject that is as yet comparatively obscure.

---

(1) *Sir Humphrey de Trafford* “*The Horse of the British Empire.*” London 1908.

*Graf E. von Wrangel* “*Die Rassen des Pferdes.*” Stuttgart 1908.



The general accepted theory among the writers on the horse is that North Africa may be considered as the home of the first warm-blooded type of horse—the ancestor of the modern light horse.<sup>2</sup>

Prof. Ridgeway holds that, "North Africa, if not the birth-place is at least the cradle of the race which has been most concerned in the making of Arabs and Barbs, and through them of the Thoroughbred. This race was the only variety of horse that roamed over the plains of Libya, in the remote epochs; it was fleet and more docile and altogether better adapted for riding purposes than any horses evolved in the plains of Europe and Asia. These were coarse, thick-set, dun and white colored horses, and in course of time, by blending these with the light and fleet-footed Libyan the various improved breeds of light and heavy horses now in existence were produced."<sup>3</sup>

The Cyclopedia of American Agriculture in discussing the two great breeds of horses remarks that: "Another distinct type seems to have existed in the South and later became the foundation stock of the beautiful horses of Persia, Arabia and Barbary States of North Africa. It now seems probable that it is principally to this form that we must look for the original stock of the modern Thoroughbred, Saddle Horse and other races of speed horses. This ancient stock so fruitful in ultimate results as exhibited by these highly improved blood horses probably had its origin in the dry desert regions of North Africa."

Von Nathusius<sup>4</sup> places the North African horses as an under-group of the Arabs and Persians; but the grouping applies to the modern area; for Ridgeway has proved beyond doubt that the Libyan tribes possessed a most notable breed of horses many centuries before the Arabs, Persians or Turks ever owned a horse.

Most continental writers are unanimous in dividing all breeds of horses into two groups: the warm-blooded (Abendländische, Oriental), and the cold-blooded (Morgenländische, Heavy horses).<sup>5</sup>

(2) R. Lydekker "The Horse and Its Relatives." 1912.

Sir W. H. Flower "The Horse." 1910.

(3) William Ridgeway "The Origin and Development of the Thoroughbred Horse." 1905.

(4) Herman Von Nathusius "Vorträge über Viehzucht und Rassenkenntnis." 1891.

(5) Simon Von Nathusius "Unterschiede zwischen der Morgen- und Abendländische Pferdegruppen." 1891.

Wilhelm Bolsche "Das Pferd und Seine Geschichte." 1888.



The warm-blooded group is characterized by "extreme refinement, breediness, beauty of form and intelligence, speed, stamnia, grace of movement and an active nervous temperament; contrasting with these are the characteristics of the cold-blooded group; great scale and grossness, slow awkward movement, sluggish lymphatic temperament, black and dun color, and much development of hair."

From the investigations of Prof. Ridgeway it is largely to be deduced that "the Libyan horse flourished before the end of the second millennium, B. C. They were superior in speed to other known breeds of Europe and Asia and were distinguished by their bay color, and star in the fore-head, which is the characteristic of the Libyan to this day." The highest pedigree of the Arab is still to-day traced to the Keheilet Ajuz family as the most distinguished of the five foundation families of the Arab stock and generally this strain of Arabs are of a bay color. "The swiftest horse known in Homeric days was a bay with a star in the fore-head. In Greek classical days the dark horses of Lybia were the swiftest known and they also bore the palm of victory from all others in the Roman circus in the first century or our era." According to Ridgeway the Arabs, Barbs and Persian breeds owe their origin to this light, fleet-footed bay horse of Lybia. As is generally known the English thoroughbred has been developed from one or from all of these breeds and present day runners and breeders of note still trace their pedigree to these great founders of the thoroughbred stock. The Oriental horses imported to England which more than any other have contributed in establishing the Thoroughbred are: the Byerly Turk, (1689) bay, the Darley Arabian, (1700) bay, the Godolphin Barb, (1730) bay, and with them are generally reckoned as the ultima thule of racing pedigree their great and illustrious sons Herod, (1758) bay, Eclipse, (1764) chestnut, Matcham (1748), bay, respectively.<sup>6</sup> The three great ancestors were all bays and fourteen hands or less than fourteen hands high;<sup>7</sup> although their famous sons of half a century later stood much higher. These stallions and their progeny were crossed with mares of various breeds and colors, yet it is remarkable and a fact of great value how the bay color became stamped upon most horses of note. Within a century and a half the bay horse had ousted in all the great tests almost every

(6) *General Stud Book, Vol. I, London 1808.*

(7) *Sir Walter Gilbey "Small Horses in Warfare." 1906.*



other color and towards the end of the last century it was the predominant color amongst the great winners and breeders.<sup>8</sup>

From statistics we gather that during the last thirty years (1836-1866) the colors of the winners at the Derby and St. Leger were:

Derby.....7 chestnuts, 7 brown, and 16 Bays

St. Leger....5 chestnuts, 7 brown, and 17 Bays

It is further found that from the winners of the Derby, St. Leger, and Oaks, between the years 1870-99, the number of greys has disappeared altogether and that the number of blacks as well as the browns and chestnut browns is strongly on the wane.

"We find thus that the increase of speed is gradually rendering the English Thoroughbred a purely bay stock and as from the earliest times of which we have any record the Libyan horse has been not only the swiftest horse known but also of a bay color, we are justified in concluding that his bay color is as fundamental a characteristic as his speed, endurance, hardiness and docility, and that it is due not to artificial selection but to natural specilization."<sup>9</sup>

This reversion to the bay color of the stock bred from Oriental sires is bearing out the all important fact that horses like other animals and like birds will transmit their distinctive colors which will remain constant from generation to generation.<sup>10</sup> In cross breeding we know that *ceteris paribus* the individual potency and characteristics of the nobler parent of more fixed type will be strongest in the transmission of these elements.<sup>11</sup> According to Davenport "that parent will be prepotent whose heredity substance is least mixed and therefore most **intensified along the line** of established characters."<sup>12</sup> The relative significance of this fact as applied to the Thoroughbred stock where parents on the paternal side were of nobler breed is self-evident.

The original wild horse was without a doubt of a "fixed color." The only existing wild horse, the Prejvalsky's, is a bay. This confirms the views of those who maintain that bay was the original color of the horse and according to Ridgeway the color of the original race of light horses. Several of the greatest authorities on

(8) Sir Walter Gilbey "*Horses—Breeding to Colour.*" 1907.

(9) William Ridgeway "*The Origin of the Thoroughbred Horse.*" 1905.

(10) Graf George Lehndorf "*Handbuch für Pferdezüchter.*" 1908.

(11) Charles Darwin "*Origin of Species.*"

(12) E. Davenport "*Principles of Breeding.*" 1907.

the horse have expressed similar views on the color question. Hurst holds that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that in certain strains there may be a partial coupling of coat color and racing power. It is instanced that the chestnut grand-children of the famous St. Simon have proved themselves inferior in racing power to their bay and brown brothers and sisters.<sup>13</sup> It is also interesting to note that there is a strong tendency for the off-spring of cross-breds to be chestnut. "In the case of Thoroughbreds," says Bunsow, "bays and browns may be either pure as regards the power of transmitting their color to their off-spring or impure when they may give rise to chestnuts."<sup>14</sup>

In the horse breeding of Arabia to-day the bays are easy favorites and firsts. Blunt says that, "out of a hundred mares among the Amezah one would see 35 bays, 30 greys, 15 chestnuts, and the rest brown or black or two or three with white feet and a snipe or blaze down the face \* \* \* \* \* with very few exceptions all the handsomest mares we saw were bay which is without doubt by far the best color in Arabia, as it is in England. In choosing I should take none but bays and if possible bays with black-points."<sup>15</sup>

Had this description been of a high class South African stud of horses it could not have been more true not even had he expounded on their merits and good qualities for I shall have opportunity to show that the Cape Horse in competition with his Arab and Persian and even Thoroughbred brothers in a county foreign to all of them easily held his own; in fact quite outstripped them.

With these remarks and by branching off into the field of research we return from the desert regions of North Africa to its sunny south to trace there the distinctive characteristics of the Libyan horse as exhibited in its descendents. I allude of course to the Cape Horse which developed to great fame during the middle of the last century.

As will be shown in the further development of this chapter, the first importations of horses to South Africa were from Java and Persia. The descendents of these like the English Thoroughbred show in a very marked degree that the most prominent inherited qualities and characteristics were according to the best accounts, those that characterized the Libyan race of North Africa.

(13) C. C. Hurst "*Royal Society of London.*" 1905.

(14) R. Bunsow "*The Mendel Journal No. 2, 1911. London.*

(15) Sir Wilfred S. Blunt "*The Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates.*" 1905.



From a report<sup>16</sup> in 1845 by Lt. Colonel Richardson who bought remounts in South Africa for the Indian Army we find that among a batch of 266 horses the colors were the following: 147 bays, 46 brown, 32 chestnuts, 19 greys, 14 dark-grey, 7 black, 1 dun. This shows a preponderance of about 56% bays, or over 72% if browns are included. The greys and dapple greys show strongly the color of the Spanish greys imported in 1807. The chestnuts and blacks are the progeny of crosses and show the influence of different types of Oriental sires. The Libyan influence, however, is most marked especially in a country where up to then horse-breeding was practically based on the system of "survival of the fittest" and in a case where the horses were picked ones. Ridgeway's argument that color is as much a characteristic—a natural specialization—as any high quality holds true in this case as it does with the Thoroughbred. The better animals of the highest qualities survived the severest tests—and these were the bays. Making use of the proverbial drowning man's straw it may be added that one of the stallions frequently alluded to in Van Riebeeck's Diary (1652–1662) as "most beautiful stallions" was called "Rode Vos," (Red fox) and was thus a bay.<sup>17</sup>

From the valuable researches of Litchtenstein during the years 1798–1806<sup>18</sup> we find the following remarks on the horse material of South Africa a hundred and fifty years after the importation of horses from Java and Persia; a considerable period of time during which the breed of horses could develop into a special and distinct type. "The breed of horses of Persian descent of the norther districts of Cape Colony is considered to have been kept the purest. They are characterized by a stronger structure, greater height, and extraordinary endurance and are of a bay color. These northern districts comprise the Hantam range of mountains and plains which were adaptable to horse breeding, forming with its dry air and scanty herbage on rich lime soils a second home for the Arab. Greater care has been bestowed on their breeding and selection than in the Southern districts."

- (16) *Papers relating to the Purchase of Horses at the Cape of Good Hope for Cavalry and Artillery Service in India and the Colony.* (Parliamentary Blue Books 1845).
- (17) Dr. E. C. Godeë-Molsbergen. *Jan van. Riebeeck. Stichter van Holland's Zuid Afrika* 1913.
- (18) Heinrich Litchtenstein. "Reisen in Südlichen Afrika 1798-1806. Berlin 1811.

Having attempted to trace the characteristics of the Cape Horse to its Libyan ancestors from such coincidents as color, stamnia, docility, endurance and hardiness we return to its history in South Africa itself.

At the time of the discovery of the Cape in 1486 the Aborigines possessed no knowledge of the horse (*Equus Caballus*) nor do we possess to-day any palaeontological proofs of its existence in pre-historic times. The natural group of Equidae, however, were represented by three distinct types and in large numbers too. They were: (1) The mountain Zebra (*Zebra equus*); (2) Burchells Zebra (*Zebra Burchelli*); (3) The Quagga (*Equus Champmani*).<sup>19</sup> The mountain zebra still lives in the mountains of the eastern Cape colony and is protected by law, while various species of it are found right over Africa as high up as Abyssinia. The Burchell's Zebra is almost extinct and the Quagga quite; the last specimen died in the Zoological Gardens, London in 1860.<sup>20</sup> The Quagga was closest related to the horse and would have been a most useful animal had it been domesticated. It disappeared, however, before something was done in that direction; although very early in the history of the colony it was remarked by one of the company's directors in excuse for his refusing to send out horses from Holland to South Africa that, "there is such a fine race of horses indigenous at the Cape and the colonists should capture them and by further breeding help themselves."<sup>21</sup>

The history of the first importation of horses leads us right back to the days when Holland was mistress of the seas and owned the Cape and enjoyed the greatest trade with the East. Merchandise, spices and food-stuffs played the main part in the trade with the East Indies, and live-stock owing to the great inconvenience and risk of life due to the long voyage formed a very unimportant part, more so because at the Cape there was an abundant supply of native cattle and sheep. It was by sheer necessity—cattle failed and trouble arose with the natives—that a couple of horses were imported and a small number were landed safely on the South African shore. It was on a stormy day in the late autumn (April, 1652) that a fleet of merchant vessels under the command of van Teylingen sighted the Cape of Good Hope. On these vessels were "some"

(19) Robert Wallace. "*Farming Industries in the Cape Colony*". 1896.

(20) R. Lydekker "*The Horse and Its Relatives*, 1912.

(21) *Archives of the Cape of Good Hope*.



horses for the Cape.<sup>22</sup> Owing to the storms the cargo could not be landed and the horses were put on shore at St. Helena from where they were subsequently fetched and returned to the Cape. In the following year four more specimens arrived, amongst them "a fine stallion—the only one at the Cape," which unfortunately was torn to pieces by lions one morning when left to graze outside the fortress.<sup>23</sup> In 1655 they succeeded in capturing two of the horses let loose on St. Helena and in the following winter two "fine stallions" were also secured, and taken to the cape leaving behind an older stallion with a mare and foal, which escaped. The following year is notable for the order the captain of the trading vessel Venenburgh had for bringing out some asses from the Cape Verde islands. In 1657 the horses left at St. Helena had increased to seven and the reward of twenty rix dollars was promised for their capture. In 1661 the commissioner Andries Fusius reported to the Lords Seventeen (Batavian Republic),<sup>24</sup> that "horse breeding is becoming a very profitable occupation, out of 22 horses imported up to date there were 15 foals." Jan van Riebeeck, the governor of the first settlement exerted himself to the-utmost to promote the well-fare of the small community and especially for the importation of horses for agricultural purposes and military service, against the raids of the natives.

In a letter of his in 1656<sup>25</sup> he is literally praying for a few horses from India and especially mares for breeding purposes. They could send him at least one with every homeward bound fleet he argued. Only three years later was his urgent request complied with to some extent. The government had an interest in the agricultural development of the colony, it was stated; but the transportation of horses was too cumbersome and stowage on board the vessels was very limited. They will, however, try to send him at least two horses with every homeward bound fleet especially now that there are troubles with the Hottentots. But it will be a hazardous undertaking owing to the long voyage, scarcity of forage and water, and they can only hope that some will reach him alive.<sup>26</sup> It was also the intention of the council as is learned from a letter

(22) *Precis of the Archieves of the Cape of Good Hope.* H. C. V. Leibbrandt.

(23) *Jan van Riebeeck, Dagverhaal 1652-1662.*

(24) *Archieves of the Cape of Good Hope.* 1652-1766.

(25) *Archieves of the Cape of Good Hope.* 1652-1766.

(26, 27 and 28) *Archieves of the Cape of Good Hope.* 1652-1795.

in September, 1659 to send a few horses from Holland to the Cape, but since an attempt to Japan had failed they thought it best to give it up.<sup>27</sup> This fact is of great importance since Quadekker in his "Het Paarden Boek" holds that "to increase weight and size in the rather small and light Cape Horse, the Netherlands's government imported some heavy Dutch horses." The most thorough search for proof of this in other works on the South African horse has failed nor does the Cape Horse in any way show the smallest trace of cold-blooded strains.

In the meantime horse breeding has developed so successfully in spite of the step-motherly treatment of the Dutch East India Company that in 1665 the first public sale of sixteen horses took place at the average price of about four pounds five shillings each, (about twenty-one dollars) a price that was equal in value to that of five large oxen in prime condition.<sup>28</sup> This year, then, marks the time when private farmers first owned horses and when horse breeding became a part of their agricultural pursuits. They do not seem to have made a great success of it. Either through neglect in breeding or some other reason, the breed has gone back much, especially in size. This is clearly demonstrated by a government notice of the year 1686;<sup>29</sup> "Since the breed of horses of this country has considerably deteriorated every person who uses a horse under the age of three years is liable to a fine of forty rix dollars.

To rectify this evil the company through the exertions of the good and zealous governor Simon van der Stell imported in 1689 some stud horses directly from Persia. With these importations we come to the close of the seventeenth century and find that horse-breeding has been firmly established. The animals were small yet highly esteemed for their usefulness and though lacking many good points externally they possessed the good qualities of hardiness, endurance, and excellent constitution and a temperament that combined great willingness, docility and steadiness.

To come back to the breed of these first importations we find that they were put down in the archives of the colony as "Java horses", and most of the writers who have touched on South African horse-breeding are satisfied to say that the Cape Horse is descended from horses imported from Java and possesses a very strong strain of Persian blood. The Java horse of the early centuries ac-

---

(29) *George McCall Theal. History and Ethnography of S. A. 1505-1795.*



cording to the best authorities is of a strong Persian and Arab strain. Freiherr von Hoerdtl in his "Pferderassen des Niederlandisch-Indischen Archipels"<sup>30</sup> says that "One cannot speak of a breed of horses, only ponies are represented and they show relation to a common stock. About the origin of these 'minature horses' nothing definite could be gathered. In all probability they are the degenerate descendents of the Arabian stallions that were imported by Arabian traders hundreds of years ago; that they were an autochthonous product of the Archipelago is out of the question." The most important pony breeders of the present day are the Sandelwoods, Makasses, and Sumbawas. They show their Arabian descent in form, temperament, hardiness, and good constitution.

From the great work of Robert Müller<sup>31</sup> we gather more or less the same facts, viz—That the Java horse is a descendent from Arab steeds imported by the Moslems during the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

The well known Dutch authority on horses, E. A. L. Quadekker in his "Het Paarden Boek" with several other writers<sup>32</sup> of fame and experience in the very localities are all unanimous in the view that the existing breeds of ponies are of Arabian descent but that through neglect and unintelligent crossing they have deteriorated considerably and that thereby a great source of national wealth is threatened to be lost. "In spite of the inaccurate and unintelligent breeding," says Quadekker, "the breed has, however, maintained its characteristics most tenaciously, which pleads very strongly for its noble origin and purity of race." If so much can be said of the Java pony to-day the horses imported from Java in 1652 and later must have been pure bred Arabs, for there is no proof that Java possessed any other breed of horses.

In the light of all these investigations made on the spot we may come to a safe conclusion, therefore, that the Cape Horse owes its origin to a fairly pure Arab—Persian strain. The Netherlands being mistress of the sea, during the sixteenth and seventeenth century and having at its disposal the best of the rich East would undoubtedly have procured the best also in the way of live-stock for her colonial possessions. This supposition will hold strongest

(30) Cf. Graf. C. G. Wrangel. *Die Rassen des Pferdes*. 1908.

(31) Robert Müller "Geographie der Wirtschaftstiere." Leipzig 1903.

(32) A. M. C. J. Ezler Ritmeester der O. I. Cavalerie "Het Paard."  
G. W. Couperus "Militaire Tydschrift" 1891.

for the several stud horses imported from Persia in 1689—the same year the Byerly Turk first attracted attention in England, and the breeding from Oriental sires became more popular. It is quite probable that the Dutch realized the plausibility of this new venture in English horse breeding and decided to furnish the Cape with Oriental horses.

Nothing definite about the size, color, and exterior characteristics of the early importations from Persia to South Africa is mentioned anywhere but working back from the characteristics of their descendents of about 178 years later—up to the time when the importation of English Thoroughbreds became very marked—we have ample justification in claiming for the Cape Horse an origin similar to that of the Thoroughbreds from the noblest strains of all warm-blooded horses—the libyan of North Africa, through its Arab, Barb, and Persian types.

About 1778 several horses were imported from South America and “they were highly esteemed for their beauty, their gentleness, and good service.”<sup>33</sup>

In that year the viceroyalty of the River Plate was created and the importation of animal products assumed greater proportions. Large droves of horses roamed over the plains in a wild state. They were the descendents of the horses abandoned by Don Pedro de Mondoza in 1538 and were of Andalusian origin being a cross between the Barb and the Arabian and became as famous as the Barbs.

The estancieros (farmers) of those days selected the best for domestic service and the good qualities of the original stock was kept up to a high degree.<sup>34</sup>

Thus the importation of these horses was only another fresh infusion of Oriental blood from a different source. They were highly esteemed and must have been very good specimens.

In 1782 almost a century after the importation of the several stud horses from Persia the first eight stallions were imported from England. Nothing definite can be ascertained about their pedigree for the first volume of the “General Stud Book” was only published in 1808. At that time all England was wildly enthusiastic over the attainments of Herod, Eclipse, Matcham, and their several illustrious sons and daughters. The Oriental sire has once for all over-

(33) Sir John Barrow “*Travels in the Interior of South Africa.*” 1797-1798.

(34) *The Evolution of Live-stock Breeding in the Argentine.* From “*The Agricultural and Pastoral Census of the Nation.*” Vol. III. Buenos Aires 1909.



come all prejudice that may have existed and did exist a little more than half a century ago before the "Grand Trio" and other sires both Barbs and Arabs came to clear it all away. The English "blood horse" has become thoroughly established and popular with all sections of the community. We can therefore safely take for granted that these stallions were Thoroughbreds or at least descendants of the Oriental horses whose names were household words in England and also abroad. Referring to writers on the horse at that time in England we find that the term "Thoroughbred" does not occur anywhere. It does not occur in the early volumes of the Racing Calendar, nor in other works relating to the turf. It does not occur in the Sporting Magazine of 1805, wherein we read of the shipment to Russia of "Stallions of the first blood and celebrity." In an 1806 issue there is a remark about stallions covering "thoroughbred mares" distinguishing them from "hunting" and "country" mares.<sup>35</sup> From Laurence in his "History and Deliniation of the Horse" we have the following: "All horses intended for this purpose (racing) must be thoroughbreds, i. e. both their sires and dams must be of the purest Asiatic and African coursers exclusively and be attested in an authentic pedigree."

More light happily is thrown on the descendants of these horses and probably on themselves too by Lichtenstein.<sup>36</sup> With his usual thoroughness he describes one of the farms where the expedition recuperated for several days.

"Mr. Van Reenen," he writes, "also exhibited to us some of the finest horses of his stud. The stallion was a beautiful 'national English horse' (national Engländer) which Mr. van Reenen has obtained from England with great difficulty and expense." He further mentions that during the English occupation of the Cape (1795-1803) several English stallions were imported. Besides Mr. van Reenen, he remembers four other colonists who have shared in this importation. They do not seem to have regretted their purchases, since their stock shows a remarkable improvement. "In fact," he remarks, "much seems to be expected for the improvement and development of horse breeding in this locality, as is judged from the excellent foals which were shown us."

These remarks refer to a stud near Capetown in the present district of Malmesbury, still a famous district for good horses to-day.

(35) *Sir Walter Gilbey "Horses—Breeding to Colour. 1907.*

(36) *Heinrich Lichtenstein Reisen in Sudlichen Afrika. 1811.*

More important though, is another account of a stud, situated in the locality which has gained undying fame for the Cape Horse.

This stud of Mr. van Reenen situated in the then Hantam district is described as "an excellent stud, containing over three hundred breeding horses, all bred from the best English and Arab breeds. He possessed among others an Arabian stallion for which he paid three thousand thalers, (approximately 2250 dollars).<sup>37</sup>

At this time the ruling governor van der Graaf, a great lover of horses, pomp, and show, doubled the number of horses in the company's stables which he took over with 66 horses. Most luxuriant equipages were kept for the governor and his following. All this and also the luxurious life based on the fluctuating wealth of the military life of two hired French regiments from Luxembourg gained for the Cape of those days the name of "little Paris." The horse had an aristocratic career in that age and figured largely in the pomp and splendor of great state occasions, and this luxuriant life at the greatest half way of the world's trade traffic has undoubtedly called for the maintenance and possession of the best horses procurable.

From these several accounts we have sufficient circumstantial evidence to strengthen the supposition that the majority of the horses imported from England during the eighteenth century were Thoroughbreds, or as they seem to have been called at the Cape "National English Horses" and it is quite clear that some very good Arabs also found their way to the best studs in the colony.

During the same year (1782) five stud horses were imported from Boston, U. S. A.<sup>38</sup> As in the case with the importations from England we have no reliable information as to the breed and other details of these horses. To throw any light on the question it is necessary to review the contemporary breeds of horses in America, and determine which was the popular one that would likely attract the attention of foreign buyers.

The foundation stock of the American horse is most fully

---

(37) The German "Thaler" of that period equalled three shillings... McCall Theal in his "History of South Africa" remarks on the dollar: "Its real value as determined by the rate of exchange fluctuated so much that it is impossible to give statistics with absolute accuracy in English money. Up to 1789 the rix-dollar equalled four shillings (still the standard coinage in the U. S. A.; as introduced by the Dutch to New Amsterdam in 1635). In 1816 it equalled two shillings and sixpence and later one shilling and sixpence. In 1820 English coinage was introduced.



worked out in Wallace's work.<sup>39</sup> The information that concerns the point in question is that in 1656 Adrean van der Donck in a description of the country (New Netherland) speaks of the stock of horses as being of "proper breed for husbandry" having been brought from Utrecht, and that the stock has not diminished in size and quality. "They had a very wide fame in that day and were better fitted for agricultural uses than the Connecticut English horses because they were larger and stronger, yet sprightly and active and some of them could run very well. Dutch horses imported to Boston in 1635 and later fetched much higher prices (35 pounds) than English horses. They were 14½ hands high, and were better adapted for general purposes than English horses except the saddle. The term "Dutch horses" is not to be confused with that of a latter period used exclusively for the great massive draft horses."

The Cyclopedia of American Agriculture holds that the Barb through the imported Andalusian horses of Spain also forms an important part of the native base on which the improvement of horses in America has been made. According to Wallace the Dutch and English horses kept up a high point of efficiency and development so that the importation of the first Thoroughbreds there was an undoubtedly first class foundation stock of warm-blooded strains.

The first Thoroughbred imported to America in 1730 was Bulle Rock from Darley Arabian out of a mare by Byerly Turk.<sup>40</sup>

He was followed by Bonny Lass by Bay Bolton out of a mare by Darley Arabian. Further importations followed after this date and before 1782 such notables as Matcham, Stark and Diomed were imported. From these observations there is no doubt that the most popular horse at that time was the progeny of the Thoroughbreds imported from England.

With these several new importations, new blood has been infused to the Cape Horse. The boundaries of the colony have expanded and horse breeding developed most successfully towards the end of the eighteenth century which has also been remarkable for two notable events which affected horse breeding very much.

In 1719 the later so much dreaded "horse sickness" made its first appearance and swept away some several hundred horses. It

(38) George McCall Theal "History of South Africa, 1625 to 1795.

(39) J. H. Wallace "The Horse of America" 1897.

(40) Merritt W. Harper "Management and Breeding of Horses." 1913.

repeated its visitation in 1763 and caused tremendous havoc amongst horse life; the farmers losing within a couple of months over two thousand five hundred horses. These deplorable events, however, were followed by a more favorable one. In 1769 the first batch of remounts for the Indian army were exported and became a forerunner of a great and prosperous trade.<sup>41</sup>

The nineteenth century is remarkable in regard to horse-breeding in so far as within its decades horse breeding reached its highest point of development and also its deplorable decline and deterioration. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the colonists became filled with the desire of possessing pedigree horses, and some of the meanest "blood weeds" of the Thoroughbred stock found their way to some of the best studs in the colony. The wool sheep farming, ostrich farming, gold and diamond mines were found more lucrative occupations and investments and the serviceable and highly efficient Cape Horse had to give way and was readily neglected. These are in short some of the reasons of deterioration of horse breeding in South Africa and we will refer to them more fully later on in this chapter.

In March, 1807, during the Napoleonic wars two French vessels were captured containing some Spanish breeding horses en route to Buenos Aires. "It is from these that we derived the blue and red roans so valuable for their great powers of endurance."<sup>42</sup> Lichtenstein<sup>43</sup> a contemporaneous writer and explorer describes their progeny as "a kind of bluish grey (blau und grau schinnmels) colored horse, of medium height with extraordinary broad breast, eminently suited for carriage horses."

Another reference to this infusion of Spanish blood is found in the Live Stock Journal No. 2 on Light Horses.<sup>44</sup> The Earl of Newcastle forgetful or ignorant of the fact that Arab, Persian, and even Thoroughbred blood went to establish the Cape Horse, holds forth that the ancestors of the Cape Horse came from Spain. He, however, expounds on the good qualities of the Spanish horse of the eighteenth century. "The Barb", writes this authority, "were the lords of the horse tribe, but the spanish horses were the princes,"

(41) McCall Theal "*History of South Africa*," 1652-1795.

(42) George McCall Theal "*History of South Africa*," since 1795.

(43) Heinrich Lichtenstein "*Reisen in Sudlichen Afrika*," 1811.

(44) Live Stock Journal No. 2 "*Light Horses—Breeds and Management*," 1907—London.



and proceeds to describe the dappled grey descendents of the Spanish stallions at the Cape especially those bred by Mr. Melck of Bergvriërplaats, which were known as "Cape Greys" (Kaapse Schimmels), and were highly prized. They were compact and well built animals and frequently sold at £300 a pair.

The following year (1808), a number of horses and mares were brought from the New England States in America. These are said to have been of Spanish and Eastern blood.<sup>45</sup> This is the second importation of breeding horses from the United States and we have every reason to believe that these horses were of good Oriental and Spanish strains, or at least the progeny of imported Thoroughbred stallions and native mares of Spanish or Oriental blood.

The greatest progress, however, was made in the development of horse breeding during the Governorship of Lord Charles Somerset. He was a passionate lover and good judge of the noble animal, and imported many of the best Thoroughbreds as their pedigrees will show. From the General Stud Book <sup>46</sup> we find that during the years 1811–20, eighteen stallions and two mares were imported to South Africa. Most of them could show an extended pedigree to the great founders of the Thoroughbred stock. Six of these stallions died on the passage out. The others were:

1. Claudio (Belissa—Phenomenon—Herod. Dam, Gohanna).
2. Cottager (Hambletonian. Dam by Dragon).
3. Bangup (Young Sir Peter. Dam by Tantrum).
4. Merry Andrew (Dick Andrews. Dam, sister Bangtail).
5. Diabolus (Williamson's Ditto. Dam, Mangolia the Younger).
6. Kutusok (Waxy—Sir Peter—Herod).
7. Kricketer (Sir George. Dam by Ruler).
8. David (Sir David. Dam by Stanford).
9. Yaffil (Popinjay. Dam by Woodpecker—and Herod Mare).
10. Pompey (Windle. Dam Anna Belle by Shuttle, a great winner and direct descendent of Darley Arabian).
11. Fascinator (Sorcerer—Godolphin Barb. Dam, Hannah).
12. Vanguard (Haphazard. Vestal by Walton).
13. Sorcerer (Sorcerer—Godolphin Barb).
14. Ploughboy.

Sorcerer was one of the finest horses seen at the Cape up to this period, and was sold for 10,000 rixdollars to a Hantam breeder. The two mares were entered as No. 1, born 1801 (Driver. Herod Mare). This Herod mare was the mother of the famous breeders

(45) *Cape Monthly* 1809.

(46) *Compare Racing Calendar* 1885. *Montgomery Martin. Also Agr. Journ. of the Cape Colony* Vol. III. *W. Grey Rattray.*

and winners "Precipitate" and "Gohanna." Mare No. 2 (Hap-hazard. Dam, daughter of Tantrum). In addition to these importations the "Records of the Cape Colony" No. 416 mentions that 36 more horses of the same description were imported either by private individuals or horse agents. Fuller details, however, are not obtainable.

The colonists were so pleased and satisfied with Sir Charles' good idea to use the Thoroughbred as a sire for the ennobling of the country-bred horses that the importation of good stallions was continued, and the decade 1820-30 brought such notables to our shores:

1. Skipper (Seud). 2. Scippio (Filho da Puta—great grand-sire of Gaines' Denmark 1850, the founder of the Kentucky Saddle horse).<sup>47</sup> 3. Battledore (Sir Oliver). These were followed in 1830-40 by 1. Protector (Defence). 2. O'Connell (Young Emilius). 3. Rococo (Cetus). 4. Lindley (Banker). 5. Humpfrey (Filho da Puta). 6. Squirrel (Cain), etc. Most of these horses were bought at a price which was then considered very high, and seldom paid thirty years later.

During the decade 1840-50 the government of the Cape of Good Hope imported several stallions which had stood at stud in England, and could show progeny that became famous on the race course and in their turn sired many great winners, and are to this day in the pedigree of the famous winners. They were:

1. Tally-Ho (Emilus—Merlin—Misrule). 2. Gorhambury (Buzzard—Woodpecker—Herod. Dam, Brocard—Whalebone—Darley—Arabian). 3. Orion (Bay Middleton—Silvertail—Gohanna—Herod). 4. Ruff (Jerry). 5. Flytrap (Bay Middleton. 6. Moscow (Muley Maloch). 7. Middleman (Muley Maloch). 8. Peter the Hermit (Gladiator). 9. Evenus (Alpheus—De Pochontas), etc. Middleman won the Liverpool and St. Leger. Evenus won the Royal Hunt Cup and Cambridgshire Races, as the property of Earl of Stradbroke. All others mentioned were noted winners. Besides these stallions there were also imported during this famous decade—the roll of which may be set down as the best of all time—some younger stallions. Among them the following shine out:

1. Sponge (Apmeck—sire of Express, a great winner). 2. Winchelsea. 3. Fancy Bay. 4. Eleusis. 5. Sir Lancelot, 6.

---

(47) *Cyclopedia of American Agriculture, Vol. III.*



Branble, etc. Several mares were also imported amongst which are especially to be mentioned :

1. Posthaste (Colonel). 2. Georgian (Buzzard—Byerly Turk. Variety — Selim — Herod). 3. Taffrail (Streetanchor. Dam, daughter of Whisker—Darley Arabian). The last two mentioned mares were covered by Sir. Hercules (Eclipse) the sire of Bird-catcher, and to him Georgian dropped on her arrival at the Cape Sir Hercules—a famous sire and one of the founders of the Hantam type of Cape Horse.

1850–60. Quality although not quite up to that imported in the preceding decade was still commendable. Among the best are to be mentioned :

1. Pantomine (Pantaloon). 2. Lammermoor. 3. Cocker-mouth. 4. Mr. Martin (Lancelot). Mr. Martin is described in the “Sporting Magazine” the recognized authority of its day as one of the handsomest horses England ever produced. 5. Cornboro (Flat-catcher). 6. Mayor of Hull (Sharon Buidhe). 7. Wrestler (Orlando—Eclipse). 8. Barkley (Teddington—Eclipse). 9. Sylvan (The Saddler). 10. Early Morn (Chanticleer). 11. Wentworth (Bay Middleton). 12. Mortimer (Fitz Allen. Mortimer was the first thoroughbred imported to the province of Natal in 1860.)

The mares imported during this period were :

1. Meliora (Melbourne—Godolphin Barb). 2. Georgie (Orlando). 3. Idollette (Storm). 4. Hebe (Herbilist). It was during this decade that the Cape Horse may be said to have reached its highest state of perfection. The Indian authorities had appointed a resident Commissioner at the Cape for the purpose of purchasing suitable horses for remounts and thousands of horses were shipped to the different parts of India. The decade 1860–70 brought the largest number of horses to our shores, the most prominent being :

1. Bonnie Morn, by Chanticleer. 2. Nothing More, by Hospodor. 3. Commissioner, by Orest. 4. King William, by Poynta. 5. Naughty Boy, by Idle Boy. 6. Newsmonger, by Newminister. 7. Nugget, by West Australian. 8. Tormentor, by Wild Daywell. 9. Sir Amyas Leigh, by Adventurer, etc.

So great has been the success of these importations that in the following decade it was the desire of almost every farmer to possess imported stallions. This drew the attention of certain unscrupulous speculators and in consequence numbers of the sorriest rips that

ever escaped the knocker were imported. Advantage was taken of the ignorance of some farmers of the true qualities of Thoroughbreds, meaning that small heads, pointed ears and peacocky carriage were by preference the points of a "blood horse," the speculators consequently delivered such specimens with an utter disregard of bone and conformation. From the Racing Calendar of 1885 we find that from 1870 up to 1885 several hundred animals of this class found their way of destruction to many an inland stud of good formation stock. "The English blood stock sale returns show that the majority of these imported and publicly sold did not realize more than 25 guineas—the range as a rule being from 3–25 guineas. An instance is on record of a horse purchased at public auction (Tattersall's) in England for five guineas, and sold at the Cape for 500 pounds sterling."<sup>48</sup>

Independent, however, of the speculator type of Thoroughbred, several good horses were imported and those deserving special attention were: Belladrum, Champagne Charlie, Buxton, Erl König, Moorfoot, Elf King, Sir Marmaduke, Plunger, Student, Catalpa, St. Augustine, Sportsman, Fire King and Wackum.

Out of this number of imported thoroughbreds some ninety judged by their capabilities, conformation, pedigree and progeny deserve special recognition. Most of them were sold to the farmers at an average price of 400 pounds and several stood at stud at the government farms.<sup>49</sup>

With these data of importations we have come up to the threshold of modern times. By the importation of the above mentioned "blood weeds" and their subsequent deteriorating effects on the original stock the lucrative trade in remounts with India was forfeited and destroyed. With the upcoming of the fast developing wool, mohair and ostrich feather industries, the gold and diamond mines, the chapter in the history of successful horse breeding in South Africa comes to a close. The palmy days of the middle of the last century have set without the dawn of a bright to-morrow. A great national loss that is increasing, has up to the present not been remedied although there is nothing except perhaps more intel-

(48) *Grey Rattray Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope, Vol. VIII.*

(49) *D. Hutcheon M. R. C. V. S. Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope, Vol. VI.*

*These journals were mainly consulted for information on the above mentioned importations Vol. I—XXXIV. (1838-1910.)*



ligent selection, better management and some good sense and wholesome enterprise, to prevent us from achieving again what was once a source of national wealth and of great economical value.

### (b) DEVELOPMENT.

In tracing the development of horse-breeding in South Africa it is necessary to bear in mind the various phases the development of the country itself passed through. Generally each Colony more or less passes through these stages:

(I) The pastoral, when the wealth of the land is in cattle, sheep and horses, ranging over practically unlimited lands.

(II) The argicultural, when the land is divided up into definite and smaller areas.

(III) Lastly, the mining and manufacturing age, when town populations grow quickly and wealth is not expressed in terms of flocks and herds nor in crops and orchards but in gold and bills of exchange.<sup>50</sup>

All these stages which can easily be traced in the development of the Union and its various provinces naturally effected the horse and its breeding in many ways. Although South Africa has passed through these various stages, still it was not in too marked a degree and we still find the three stages fairly well in existence side by side.

The pastoral phase certainly covers a longer period than the rest. For over two centuries (1650-1870) the pastoral life ruled supreme, and all wealth consisted of flocks of sheep and herds of cattle and horses roaming over practically endless pastures. Even to-day with only one and a half million whites; scattered over 450,000 sq. miles of territory (excluding natives and their territories) the conditions are largely pastoral and additional feeding and other scientific methods in farming are still in their infancy.

The methods adopted in horse-breeding were simple and natural and were adapted to produce a hardy, useful animal at a minimum cost of food and labor. The horses liked the half wild life and natural selection was able to do its work in eliminating the weakly animals from the troop. In more thickly settled countries horses are valuable and weaklings are allowed to live and breed on. In a pastoral country the economic value of stock is low; drought, cold and scarcity of food, the tests of warfare and hunting calling

(50) *Sir Humphrey de Trafford "The Horse of the British Empire." 1907.*

forth great strength, endurance and stamina, weed out the weakly ones and only the fittest survive for a foundation stock on which to graft any qualities we desire.

The public sale of horses in 1665 marks the year when horse-breeding was taken up by farmers as part of their agricultural pursuits. The animals were small yet efficient enough to supply all their needs in ploughing, transport and military exploits. The Commandos (light cavalry) then formed, played a great part in all their warfare and developed to world-wide fame during the last war when British troops "with double teams could not keep up with the boer commandos."<sup>51</sup> With the exception of a few "fine stallions" (schone hengsten) among the early importations further breeding was carried on by selecting the most efficient young stallions regardless of beauty of form, making the highest amount of good qualities the qualification for selection. In 1689 the year Byerly Turk first attracted attention to the breeding from Oriental sires in England, fresh blood was introduced by the importation of several stallions from Persia; this was a wise step for the "breed of horses has deteriorated very much in size."<sup>52</sup>

At the end of the 17th century horse-breeding was firmly established and the farmers complimented themselves on possessing an animal of "general utility," hardy, self-supporting and of good constitution and temperament. The settlement counted about 1000 souls, and owned 261 horses, 4189 cattle, 48,960 sheep; while the company possessed 140 horses, 1164 cattle and 9218 sheep on their farms.<sup>53</sup>

In the following century rapid strides were made into the interior. New and extensive pastures were found beyond the first mountain ranges and the foundations of the great pastoral community with larger flocks were laid. Except a probable importation of a horse or two by the returning fleets, the breed of horses received no additional foreign blood for the better part of a century. During those eventful days amid hosts of barbarians and wild animals the best that was in horseflesh was appealed to, and this established a foundation stock that would yield wonderful results when mated with animals that could make up such qualities

(51) R. Bromley—*Speaking of 30 years' experience in Ag. Jour. of Cape Colony Vol. XXXIII.*

(52) *Archives of Cape of Good Hope 1652-1795.*

(53) George McCall Theal. *History of South Africa 1652-1795.*

as height and conformation of form which have been lost in sight of in the demand for general efficiency.

During the years of peace the horses were allowed to run night and day in a natural state; the loss of an occasional foal through the attacks of wild animals was of minor importance; but the thefts by bushmen was a great torment. During the decades 1710-30 a continual warfare was kept up against these marauding and migratory hordes; thousands of cattle, sheep and horses were carried away into mountain fastnesses.<sup>54</sup> Cory has found that during the ten years (1785-95) 309 horses were killed and 309 taken away, along with thousands of cattle and sheep.<sup>55</sup> It may incidentally be mentioned here that these horses were probably later taken from these hordes by the Zulu nation who in their turn waged war on these tribes and that they ultimately gave rise to the famous "Basuto Pony."

The plains of the Karroo with its dry air and rolling plains of grass on rich soils with a fair percentage of lime were very adaptable to successful horse-breeding, and large troops often consisting of over 300 mares were quite frequent.<sup>56</sup> In 1719, however, this natural paradise of the horse was rudely disturbed by the appearance of a deadly epizootic disease, which carried off 1700 animals within a couple of months. This disease, which is not quite subdued to-day, is known as "Horse-sickness" and is caused by mosquito bites. In 1763 it claimed another 2500. At that time it was found that if the horses were kept on a certain altitude during the autumn months of April and May the majority of the animals could be saved. After the first frosts have fallen the danger is over.

In 1769 several recruiting officers in the Indian army, however, found a sufficient number fit for cavalry purposes. Nothing could be ascertained about the quality and size of these horses; but the fact that South Africa became since then a recruiting field of remounts for the Indian Army proves that these horses have not cut too sorry a figure among the horses from Persia and Arabia. In 1782 the first English stallions were imported, and were followed in the same year by five stud horses from Boston, United States of America. Most of these found their way to the studs in the north-

(54) *George McCall Theal "History of South Africa" 1652-1795.*

(55) *G. E. Cory "The Rise of South Africa" 1913. Vol. II.*

(56) *Heinreich Lichtenstein. "Reisen in Sudlichen Afrika. Berlin 1811.*



ern districts and helped to swell the fame of the "Hantam" type of horses, throughout the land.

In a letter from General Craig to H. E. Lord Dundas dated October 31st, 1796 we learn that the price paid for 200 remounts averaged 80 rix dollars, while 100 rix dollars was paid for horses of better quality. Some months later the price had risen 120 rix dollars and even 150.<sup>57</sup> The census returns of 1798 records the population as consisting of 21,764 whites or 61,447 including colored servants and slaves. They possessed 47,436 horses, 251,206 cattle and 1,448,536 sheep. The boundaries of the Colony enclosed some 120,000 square miles of excellent pasture and arable land.<sup>58</sup>

The increasing demand for remounts in India is a sure proof that the horse material has improved considerably during the century. They certainly have increased in size judging from Lichtenstein's account already mentioned of the stud in the Hantam district of over 300 stud horses of greater size and better conformation than those of the other districts, more south. He mentions that they were bred from the best English and Arab sires. This, and the fact that horses were imported from Persia in 1689, as well as Lichtenstein's mentioning of an Arab stallion at another large stud costing its owner over 3000 "thaler" proves that more stallions from Arabia and Persia were imported after 1689 and before 1782. In 1799 McCall Theal remarks in his "History of South Africa" that "a fairly good horse for either the saddle or the trace was now common and there was a healthy spirit of competition and rivalry—especially among the young men as to who shall have the best \* \* \* \* anything tending to improve horses and cattle was met with general approbation."

With a foundation stock sound in limb, bone and constitution, with the hardiness, endurance and stamina of two centuries handed down to them, the intelligent horse-breeder could have accomplished much in the 19th century when some of the best English "blood horses" were imported; and what they have achieved makes the regret of the loss of it all the keener.

The 18th century opened with the capture of certain Spanish stallions on board a hostile vessel.<sup>59</sup> They must have been of high

(57) *Archives of the Cape of Good Hope* (one rixdollar equals 4 shillings or approximately 1 dollar United States money.)

(58) Sir James Barrow "Travels in South Africa" 1797-98.

(59) George McCall Theal "History of South Africa after 1795." Vol. I.

breeding for with Cape mares they bred true to the type and hundreds of their progeny were found all over the Colony within half a century and were known as "Cape Greys" during the end of the last century.

Individual efforts were made to improve the stocks of cattle, horses and sheep; the government lent aid to these endeavorers but nothing officially was done. In 1800 the first "Society for the encouragement of agriculture, arts and sciences was caused to be established; but beyond talking this society did nothing."<sup>60</sup> The society was, however, amply supplied with cattle, horses and slaves, but somehow all turned out a failure. In 1804, another attempt was made with greater success; 25,309½ acres of government land was allotted to the Board of Agriculture, which was for the first time added to the government. A number of the best breeds of cows were purchased and a pure bred bull from Europe as well as another of the same breed, given as a present were added. A small flock of the first Merino sheep at the Cape with a majority of rams and some Hantam mares improved by crosses with imported English horses were also purchased and Mr. van Reyneveld who owned a handsome stallion allowed the use of it gratis. Government Farms—it would be more correct to call them "Stud Farms"—were erected at several suitable places.<sup>61</sup>

In the Cape Gazette of 1823 we find that at such and such a stud farm, English stallions stood at stud for 6 rix dollars per mare. At the Grote Post farm, stood:

Walton (4 yrs.) (Walton-Musidora) bred by H. R. H. Duke of York.

Vanguard (6 yrs.) (Haphazard) bred by Duke of Grafton. Vanguard won the King's Plate at Winchester, 1820, beating Euphrates and Merryweather, both great winners.

The records of the Cape Colony for the year 1823 remarks that "Mr. van Reenen the former proprietor of the estates at the Hantam, had under the Dutch government paid much attention to his breed of horses and had increased their number as well as their value." He sold to Mr. Louw 10 mares for £1126.15, and 1100 sheep for £563.8.

The van Reenen Bros. are frequently met with in writings and

(60) *George McCall Theal* "History of South Africa after 1795." Vol. I.

(61) *Records of the Cape Colony.* Vol. XV.

accounts of agricultural pursuits in South Africa during the 18th century. They owned large studs each from 300–400 horses in the best grazing districts (Malmesbury and North Cape Colony—New and Old Hantam—Calvinia, Hanover and Colesberg.)<sup>62</sup> Their exertions have undoubtedly done much for the ennobling of the breed of horses in the Colony, and especially of the Hantam type to which almost all the farmers turned for their stallions.

During the first half of the 18th century there was a steady influx of Thoroughbred blood. The imported stallions were sold to the best breeders or buyers. Many of the best found their way to the Hantam studs and its old reputation was kept up and the standard highly improved. A certain farmer rode 400 miles on horseback with a saddlebag full of money to buy Turpin.<sup>63</sup>

Considerable improvement has been made in the development of horse-breeding since the importation of Thoroughbred stallions as has been proved by numerous letters in reply to a circular sent out by Lord Charles Somerset to those farmers who bought of the horses imported.

To get an idea of this great impetus the breed of horses received it would be necessary to pursue some of these replies to the governor's circular asking what effect the using of Thoroughbreds as sires has had on their studs and in their incomes.

Letters from Mr. D. van Reenen to Capt. Hare Aid-de-camp to H. E. the Governor, dated Sept, 28, 1825.<sup>64</sup>

“Sir:—In answer to your inquiry made by desire of H. E., the Governor whether the breeding of horses has been a profitable speculation to my father since the purchase of English stallions. I have the honor to inform you that my family were known to have been the first breeders of horses in the Colony and consequently likely to pursue the best methods.

About nine years ago we thought it expedient to purchase two English stallions since when our annual profit from breeding horses has been two-thirds greater, a proof of the benefit derived by the introduction of English blood stallions. Allow me to inform you that horse-breeding is now a more lucrative employment than any other description of agriculture \* \* \* \* \* The following extract from my books will serve to verify my assertion.

(62) *Lichtenstein—George McCall Theal—Records of C. C., etc.*

(63) *D. Hutcheon M. R. C. V. S. in Agr. Journ. of C. C. Vol. XXXIII.*

(64) *Records of the Cape Colony Vol. XVII.*



“1824.	Sold	6 horses for	4000 Rixdollars.
		2 horses for	1700 Rixdollars
		1 horse for	850 Rixdollars
		1 horse for	800 Rixdollars
		2 horses for	1800 Rixdollars
		21 horses for	5250 Rixdollars
		36 horses for	14400 Rixdollars

The amount of 36 horses previous to introduction of the English blood stallions=5400 Rixdollars.” (1 Rixdollar= one shilling and sixpence).

William Proctor writes:—“I purchased 8 thoroughbred mares for £2500 also 3 thoroughbred stallions for £350, £400 and 4500 Rixdollars. My profits in horse-breeding amounted to 100,000 Rixdollars and my profit from Yaffil (4500 Rds.) alone exceeded 29,000 Rixdollars independent to my having 20 Thoroughbred fillies got by him out of my English mares. I have a colt from Yaffil for which I frequently refused 3500 rixdollars.”

To Lord Charles is due the honor for opening up and developing this valuable branch of our farming. In 1816 he writes to the Earl of Bathurst: “Next to the export of wine I conceive the soil most calculated for the export of horses and were a market once rendered it might in a few years be carried to an extent quite unlimited.”<sup>65</sup> In the meantime he exerted himself in encouraging horse-breeding in the Colony and in finding a good market. In the following year he could write to the Secretary of State that he is “on the eve of closing a bargain to export annually 400 horses for the Madras calvary exclusive of a proportion better horses for the officers. This (as the freight will be paid here) will bring, I calculate, about £24,000 per annum into the Colony for an article of which, till I came, there was no export.”<sup>66</sup>

Lord Charles once having grasped the situation took the lead himself and financed the first batch of 34 Thoroughbreds from England and although he lost heavily, as will be shown, he persevered until he left the land where every horse-breeder will remember him with gratitude and admiration.

Of the 34 horses imported 11 died at sea, 2 died after landing, he gave one to Mr. Cloete, one remained unsold and 19 were sold for

(65) *Records of Cape Colony, Vol. XVII. 1816.*

(66) *Records of Cape Colony, Vol. XVII. 1816.*

£8051.5; thus losing on the whole transaction £5548.15.<sup>67</sup> This did in no wise discourage him as was shown in the previous part of this chapter things progressed rapidly and the breeding from Thoroughbreds as sires became predominant. Another incidence that gave Lord Charles' India Trade a great impetus was that during this time a number of Indian Nabobs flocked to the Cape, then highly esteemed as a health resort. "The Cape horse was sufficiently attractive to draw their attention and the Nabobs, lavish in dispensing the golden mohurs, paid very high prices and took many horses back as chargers and hacks, they being the best of their class and able to stand the trying Indian climate better than the English Thoroughbred, they soon attracted the attention of the Indian Government authorities to the advantages of the Cape as a field for procuring remounts from. With what results we have already shown and may add that 5482 horses and 198 mules to the value of £215,645 were bought in South Africa for the various campaigns in the Indian Mutiny."<sup>68</sup>

At this time 1810, Australia also imported her first horses from South Africa and became indebted to that country for the first horses that ever trod her soil. The animals, according to a contemporary writer in Australia, appear to have been obtained without selection and to have been poor specimens.<sup>69</sup> In an enclosure in one of Lord Charles' letters it is stated that "Capt. Thomas took out 28 horses to Australia in 1826 and lost 14." The Captain certainly made a good selection as at this period "a vast improvement has been effected in the general quality of the Cape Horse."<sup>70</sup>

Thus began an industry in Australia that in 1860 perfectly outranged the South African trade in remounts for India and has kept the lead ever since, pocketing the larger part of one and a quarter million pounds sterling annually.

Another factor that has done much in the development of horse-breeding is racing. More fully will be dwelt on this phase of the industry in its particular character. It may, however, be remarked that with the Thoroughbred came also that grandest and best of tests for stamina, quality of bone and tendon, constitution and temperament—the race course.

(67) *Records of Cape Colony, Vol. XVII. 1816.*

(68) *Lt. Col. Apperley. Cape Conthly, Vol VII.*

(69) *Athuson 1824 by Grey Rattray in Agricultural Journal of the Union of South Africa, Vol VIII.*

(70) *Records of the Cape Colony 1826.*

From the various accounts is established that the South African bred Thoroughbred and even half-bred could hold his own to many of the imported horses. Campfire in the 3rd generation, through Stockwell's stock by Blair Athol proved that the South African Thoroughbred is equal in every way to the Thoroughbred of England. He distinguished himself greatly in England in 1904, and now stands there at stud.<sup>71</sup>

A large amount of runners and winners on the South African Turf hailed from the Hantam districts and in every way proved their efficiency also on the race course. Some of the young horses entered were taken from the veld, and with indifferent training were sent on the course, not so much for the gaining of the prizes but for the sport and "to teach and harden them and test their merit" as the farmers would say.

Often these veld-hardened colts would get the better of the trained horses of the towns.

From a casual observer in "Life at the Cape" (by a lady 1862) the following remarks are recorded: "The racing was comparatively poor, the horses slight and few in number and not particularly well trained—but, what astonished us was to see a rough little shooting pony called "Gazelle" carry off the Queen's Plate from a noble English horse and this in spite of the very fine riding of an old English jockey against a weazened little Hottentot." Instances of this kind may be multiplied.

During the years 1835–39 something happened that upset the agricultural as well as the administrative affairs of the Colony to a great extent; but at the same time opened up new lands in the unknown interior and resulted in filling new pastures with large flocks of sheep, cattle and horses. Owing to the foolish and inconsistent acts of the Home government thousands of farmers, whose continued appeals for redress in gross mismanagement, oppressive rules and acts of injustice were ignored, left their farms and homesteads and joined in the great "Trek" over the borders of the Colony. Statistics are very unreliable as to the numbers, for there were many groups on different routes; the number is estimated at 8000–10000.<sup>72</sup> For about twenty years they continually moved about. Several small republics were established and periods of several

(71) *Charles Southey. Natal Agr. Jour. Vol XV.—1910.*

(72) *George McCall Theal—History of South Africa After 1795*



years of peace in between were generally followed with great success in horse-breeding and raising of stock. Horse-breeding, owing to their continuous moving, hunting and fighting was given great attention and Remount officers for the Indian Army found in 1854 many good specimens beyond the Orange river.<sup>73</sup>

These horses are described as large and fine. For fresh blood the farmers depended on the large studs of the Hantam. The studs of the van Zyl's, Theunissen's, Louw's, Robertson's and others were very famous. Thoroughbred stallions bought from the Government were sold to the Orange Free State farmers and so keen have they been to possess them that farmers in the Colony were prohibited to sell any imported stallions to the Orange Free State farmers before the period of two years after they have possessed them has expired.

The Hantam studs at that period possessed very good quality. Amongst others were such worthies as Sir Hercules imported in utero and true son of the Great Irish horse of the same name, Sorcerer, War Eagle, Evenus, Turpin, Sir Amyas Leigh and Champagne Charlie. Damascus (Arab) by brood mares of  $\frac{3}{4}$  thoroughbred blood made Mr. van Zyl famous as a successful breeder of race horses. The mare Witkous by Damascus bred to Express the following winners: Sir Reuben, Prince Alexis, Good Hope, Rob Roy, Hantam Belle and Bonnie Lassie dam of the winners and breeders Hardcash and Prosecutor. "These were all good winners and could stay forever. All these along with Pearl Diver and many more produced progeny that could be on a par with those of any other country."<sup>74</sup>

In those days the great breeders were determined to have the best and paid up to £600 (3000 dollars) and more for good stallions, Thoroughbreds, with plenty of bone, great size and good record. With sires of this class and the veld everything to be desired it is no wonder that good animals were bred.<sup>75</sup>

The various means of conveyance and transportation with the attendant effect on horse-breeding deserve a few remarks.

One of the first undertakings of every colonising settlement is the creation of an efficient system of transportation and means of

(73) *Blue Books of 1858. Papers Relating to Purchase of Horses at the Cape of Good Hope for Cavalry and Artillery Service in the Colony and India.*

(74) *The Agri. Journal of the Cape Colony Vol. XXVI.*

(75) *The Agri. Journal of the Cape Colony Vol. XXVI.*

travelling, and in this South Africa has gradually accomplished a great deal.

The first colonists found with the natives the pack-ox as the only beast of burden, especially selected ones were also used for riding and racing.

The Boers introduced the ancient germanic traveling wagon, with which their ancestors—the Climbers and Tentons crossed the Roman boundaries.<sup>76</sup> This cumbrous and unwieldy wagon was a real treasure to the sturdy pioneer of old, it did a three fold duty of home, conveyance and fort. It was drawn by 8 to 10 pairs of oxen and how the formidable mountain passes were crossed with such transport remains the wonder and admiration of all who behold the ancient tracks across the mountain sides. For about two centuries the ox-wagon has been the chief mode of conveyance and has identified itself so much with the nation's history that it was given a place of honor in the coat-of-arms of both the old republics.

Good roads were first made in 1844,<sup>77</sup> and were soon followed by bridges and mountain passes at great costs. To-day the Union is threaded with a network of excellent roads.

As the settlement increased and spread out, other means of transport and locomotion were called for, and it is this necessity that has largely caused the production of the Cape Horse and its unequalled qualities and capabilities as a riding horse. Outlying districts like Graaf-Reinet, Calvinia, Hantam and Swellendam some 300–400 miles from Cape Town all required more serious communication to be done on horse-back. This called for sturdy horses with great endurance and stamina and with continual hunting expeditions and frequent wars these qualities were perfected.

During the middle of the 18th century, owing to better roads and greater safety of life and property, the "Horse wagon" made its appearance. Burchell travelling in South Africa in 1822 in describing a Race meeting he attended makes the following remarks on the equipages: "Vehicles of every description from the elegant built London carriage of the Governor and the antiquated Dutch calash and the light jolting 'paarde-wagen' are seen about \* \* \* \* the 'paarde-wagen' is a light waggon drawn by 6 or 8 horses and used more frequently for the conveyance of persons than for the

(76) H. Kloessel. "*Die Sudafrikanische Republiek.*" Leipzig 1890.

(77) Robert Wallace. *Farming Industries of the Cape colony* 1916.

carrying of loads, which are left for the 'ossewagen'. The paarde-wagen is in fact the colonists waggon of pleasure."<sup>78</sup> A few remarks from a contemporaneous English writer on the efficiency of this part of horse breeding would not be out of place here. Remark- ing on the driving and teams he writes that "The Four-in-hand Club must not assume to itself the least precedence. They are compar- atively children in the profession and would shrink before a boer, who in an instant would get his team in hand and trotting them in various directions with the greatest dexterity and completeness \* \* \* In truth, nothing would surprise an English coachman more, than the sight and action of the pleasure waggon of a boer with its usual appointments in spirited horses, driver, and well-painted waggon."<sup>79</sup>

Lichtenstein also very graphically describes pleasure trips in such wagons and praises the dexterity and skill of the average driver as far above anything he has seen and known in Europe. More recently Sir James Bryce in his "Impressions of South Af- rica" also amongst others expressed himself with admiration on the excellent equipages and the splendid driving be it in the city or the country.

The horse-wagon was followed and ultimately superceded by the Cape cart, a perfectly home made article used both as a means of speedy travelling and as a carriage of pleasure. The Cape cart and its pair is a great factor in the maintenance of the efficiency of of our horses. However poor a small farmer may be he will not consider himself of any standing unless he is the proud possessor of an excellent pair of certain pedigree,—generally a certain breed- er's name supply this. The possession of an excellent riding horse and a shooting pony is a sine qua non in the farming equipment of even the smallest farmer.

The Cape cart holds its own, even against the ever increasing motor traffic, for in a sum total of pleasure, convenience, and ele- gance it would be hard to find any conveyance to beat the Cape cart and a well trained and selected pair. The good horse, wisely with- drawn from hopeless competition and kept within proper spheres of activity, which are plentiful in South Africa, need have no fear of total defeat.

The periodic visitations of "Horse Sickness" seemed to have

(78) William Burchell "*Travels in the Interior of South Africa.*" 1822.

(79) William Wilberforce "*State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822.* London 1823.



increased with the number of horses, perhaps owing to the large number owned by individual farmers less care was accorded the troop than when good horses were scarcer. Towards the middle of the last century about the fourth of the total number of horses were swept away. It is quite obvious that these losses worked very discouragingly on horse breeders. A period of indifference in the matter of horse breeding set in. Merino sheep and Angora goat farming and subsequently Ostrich farming absorbed much attention and were more remunerative than horse breeding. The trade with India in remounts was lost to Australia and for the remaining part of the century the horse material was gradually deteriorating and the industry declined.

### (c) DECLINE.

On no particular phase of the history of horse breeding has so much been written in South Africa as on its deterioration and the methods to be followed in order to regain the old standard and high reputation. There are some very voluminous Bluebooks<sup>81</sup> that should be carefully perused by every horse breeder in the Union. They are those containing the "Papers relating to the purchase of horses at the Cape of Good Hope for cavalry and artillery service in the Colony and India" and "Additional Papers relating to the supply of remounts for the British Army in India." These highly interesting Papers are spiced with numerous Reports of Select Committees and Appendices dealing with the most important aspects of the Industry. The best ones date back to the year 1875 and up to the year 1898; the years when horse breeding was rapidly declining.

The perusal of a bona fide Bluebook is certainly not a pleasant affair, one struggles through it and often comes away from it not much the wiser and probably a sadder man; but many a good lesson and warning of the past can be obtained from these Bluebooks.

It is gathered from these and other sources that the decline of horse breeding can be ascribed to several great causes; some certainly were beyond the control of the farmers, but others reflect much to their discredit.

One of the chief causes of deterioration may be attributed to

---

(81) *The official Notes, Proceedings and Reports to Parliament are printed in quarter volumes and kept in the Parliament Archives. Copies are also kept at the High Commissioner's Office in London.*

the breeding from inferior stallions. Since 1860 there has been a desire to breed from Thoroughbreds only. Unfortunately the standard of earlier breeders was lost sight of; a fashionable pedigree was insisted upon with utter disregard of bone, power and other desirable qualities; all was sacrificed for blood and a very inferior animal was obtained, which was fittingly branded by the more intelligent breeders as "blood weeds."

In the company they met with at the Cape these "blood weeds" had some success on the race course and were sought for as breeders and in this way they spread their harmful influences far and wide over the land. Their offspring could not stand the tear and wear of the veld conditions so well as those of the sires of previous generations, in which plenty of bone, girth, size and good conformation had to be on a par with good pedigree and race course record in order to be eligible for breeders. The progeny of these peacocky and weedy sires soon convinced the farmers of their illusions and a great attempt was made to rectify their blunders.

A select Committee of the best breeders was appointed to investigate matters. The various possible causes for the deterioration of the breed were investigated and it was found that want of size was the most common failure and general complaint of the remount officers in India. Any large breed of animals decreases in size, unless supplied with abundance of food and unless a stream of fresh blood of the best strain is infused into the original stock from time to time. The deterioration in size is more true of the progeny of half-bred sires than of pure-bred ones.

The several breeds of horses, pure-breds as well as half-breds were considered with the view to select the best sires for the improvement of the fast declining breed. The average Cape mare has breeding enough and the half-breed sire does not breed true to type and the transmission of size, for which he will mainly be used will not be so permanent and reliable as is desired. The pure-breds that were considered the best were the Arab and the Thoroughbred and even the Arab although one of the best possible sires was put out of the field on the argument that after all it was not so much quality that was wanted but size and this he could not supply.

The Thoroughbred was pointed out as the best sire. His bones are firmer and more compact in their texture, his muscles are of finer quality and comparatively greater power, his heart is larger

and nervous system, power of endurance much more highly developed. The best type of Thoroughbred implies that the animal is possessed of superior qualities of every description and his power of transmitting these qualities to his offspring surpasses that of any other breed of horses. All these qualities combined with an excellent Turf record, good pedigree, great weight, and size—15½–16 hands, would point out the sire required; but this ideal type is, even in England, a not too common one and they are often sold at prices beyond the dreams of averice; still a King's premium horse will come as near to this type as possible and would cost at least £1000 to £2000 and since this is beyond the reach of the average farmer and can be supplied by the Government only to a limited extent, the Committee had to turn its attention to other breeds. Of the lighter pure-breds that came into consideration were the Clevelands and Hackneys.

In the meantime the farmers showed the tendency of going to the opposite extreme, by introducing big cart-horse half-breds to their light  $\frac{3}{4}$  bred Thoroughbred maress; the offspring was as could be expected unsymmetrical brutes, wanting in almost all the qualities that are essential in a good riding or carriage horse.

The sire that was ultimately decided upon as the best first instalment was the Hackney; because he will tend to increase the size, bone, and substance of the breeding stock. The offspring, when mated with a first class Thoroughbred, will produce an excellent type of horse; for if the right kind of Thoroughbred can be obtained and paid for, he would be found equal in size and substance to a great many of the best Hackneys and above all in such qualities as temperament, endurance and stamnia he stands pre-eminent.

On the recommendation of this Committee the Government sent an experienced and responsible buyer to buy the desired type of Hackney. In 1888 eight very good Hackneys and one Norfolk Roadster were imported and placed at the several stud farms. The average price was £272 and the farmers made very good use of them. On the average each stallion covered 33 mares. Altogether the Government imported up to this date and since 1860 some 30 stallions, mostly Hackneys, and each year they served an increasing number of mares.

At the same time there was a strong taste for Clevelands and



a goodly number were imported by private individuals and speculators; but this enterprise fell into the background almost unnoticed, and was kept up by very few breeders.

The Hackneys found great favor with the farmers and breeders and the Government was persuaded to import another batch of selected stallions and requested that they should not be chestnuts and at least 16 hands high. The government promised to consider these points and Dr. Hutcheon, Chief Veterinary Surgeon was sent to England to buy Hackneys. It was difficult enough to get the proper type of sire and to get this type in fast colors was not an easy matter for the color of the breed is chestnut. The great breeders and sellers also looked upon the Government buyer as a good milch cow for they knew he had to get these horses within a certain time; yet Dr. Hutcheon managed to bring out 28 Hackneys all above 15½ hands and with fast colors, at the average price of £232 which was even lower than that of the previous year although the quality was in every respect as good. Since then Hackneys were great favorites with most of the great horse breeders in the Southern districts of the Cape Province. In 1891 the Government once more officially imported a batch of the best Hackney stallions. Cleveland Bays and Roadsters were given fair trials too; but their success has been variable and partial.

In spite of these improvements the Indian Trade has slipped from our hands for good in favor of Australia where great care has been bestowed on horse-breeding since the first importations from the Cape in 1815 to 1825. Great studs also sprung up all over India, which supplied some of the required remounts in quantity at least if not quality. The same can be said of the Australians which were thoroughly condemned by several commanding officers as being totally unfit for campaigning.

As was frequent in those days in matters of trade the Indian Trade in remounts became enveloped in the underhand dealings of the middle man, who favored his own private ends at the expense of larger and more important communities.

The results of these trade scandals are often quoted as the chief reason for the decline of horse-breeding in South Africa. Since they happened about the same time as the importation of worthless stallions they certainly added force to the rolling stone.

The first horses for military service in India were exported in

1769 and ever since fresh supplies had been drawn from the Cape Colony. During the years 1840-60 Indian Army Authorities stationed a recruiting officer in the Colony, who had to select and buy up such numbers as were required for service in India. Several of these men, Col. Apperley, Lt. Col. Richardson, Major Baker and others became intimately connected with all matters relating to horse-breeding in the Colony and easily managed with some exertion to send out horses that were selected by themselves and were quite fit for cavalry and artillery work. Their successors, however, lived in the cities and were contented to buy horses at exorbitant prices from numerous speculators—it is surprising to find what lot of harm these middle men, the speculators, have done to the industry; they were perfect fiends and it is only to be hoped that the average farmer has taken his warning; for of all trade mongers the unscrupulous horse dealer is certainly the worst.

At this rate it is quite obvious that inferior animals were obtained for the Indian Army and this procedure had its bad effects both ways.

Lt. Col. Bower in criticizing this method and approving of the sensible ways adopted by previous officers relates an incident he had when buying remounts, which will explain the farmer's share in this bad business apart from his greivous mistake of breeding from inferior stallions; for their harmful effect could not have been too rapid in a stock which had a due proportion of the best Thoroughbred and Arab blood infused into their veins for the last two centuries.

He had the good sense to select the horses himself and remarks that the "duty of a Remount agent at the Cape is an arduous one, he should be gifted with the leather of a post boy and the patience of Job." In company of Major le Marchant they came across a farm where the farmer said he had no horses to sell; after they had off-saddled Bower asked to be shown over the stables and found "ten uncanningly neat bay geldings." On pressing for a sale of these, the farmer replied: "Oh, these are my span (waggon team), and are not for sale." The horses were subsequently trotted out and five were noted as fit for troopers. A second span was brought up from the veld and four were picked and after "some amount of coquetry nine good horses were added to the roll of the 7th, Dragoon Guards."

“After this specimen of real or feigned indifference of a Cape boer (Dutch farmer) who is as wide-awake and coquettish as any Londoner, and with the speedy requirement of a regiment of heavies for immediate full service it is not to be wondered that remount officers have great difficulty in procuring remounts.”<sup>82</sup>

However, the work was done and within three and a half months from disembarkation the regiment was reported fit to take the field and that too with horses that excited the approbation of two successive commanding officers fresh from England. \* \* \* In a letter from the Deputy Quartermaster General some time afterwards, he mentions among other duties performed by them; “a forced march of 240 miles in 11 days without a single casualty; the average weight of a dragoon being above 19 stone (266 lbs.). The horses were obtained for £24:10 to £26:10 each.”<sup>83</sup>

Several years later the harmful effects of the “blood weeds” were beginning to tell and much greater care had to be taken to obtain good remounts; but instead of this, matters were left in the hands of the speculators who were also responsible for the selling at fabulous prices the scrapings of Tattersall’s stables at London.

Besides the importation of good sires for the improvement of the breed of horses, other methods were attempted in order to keep up as much as possible with the demands of the Indian market. These attempts were directed against the speculator type of remounts; but unfortunately they were so stringent and even unfair that it nipped all private enterprise in the bud.

In order to stimulate the home industry as well as breeders at the Cape and Australia to produce the required type of remount, the Indian Authorities notified the Government at the Cape that in future horses will be bought for 575 rupees (£57:10) (287 dollars) each, delivered at their several depots in India, after they have been passed by a Committee appointed by the Board of Directors. The owners or speculators standing all risks of importation and disembarkation.

The Cape Government gave this notice, every publicity, and announced that “100 horses will be received by the Madras Government every year until further notice.” It would be well to give the description of the horse that was required; because in some

(82) *India Sporting Review*, August 1857.

(83) *India Sporting Review*, August 1857.



measure it describes the Cape horse that reaped so much fame in the Indian campaigns. "The horses are required to be not less than nor more than 6 years old on delivery, and not under 14½ hands high. Each horse must be free from vice or blemish or any defect whatsoever, which may constitute unsoundness of wind, limb or vision; to be of good constitution with free action, sufficient bone, general substance and symmetry to render him in every respect fit for artillery and European Dragoons; to be judged by a Committee of officers at Madras."<sup>84</sup> In short a perfect animal for £57:10, irrespective of all risks.

Such a Government invitation has been in force for fourteen years and only met with one response. Out of 13 horses landed only 6 were passed by the Committee, whilst the importer had to bear the loss of 8 which died on the voyage.<sup>85</sup>

There is a large amount of proof of the unfairness, unscrupulous judging and even utter ignorance displayed by this Committee as well as others of its kind twenty years earlier.

In a letter to the *Indian Sporting Review*, 1858, Lt. Col. Bower writes that "the Cape farmers will never submit to the freaks of the India Remount Committee, for the blunders of such tribunals on all occasions of Cape horses being inspected are too notorious. Poor Havelock's horses sent to Bombay in 1837-8 were disapproved of, yet they proved themselves hardy, and kept in good condition, perhaps better than others and took in addition to their own work a share with the Gulf Arabs in doing the work of the Bengal stud breeds which had to be lead. Again the Cape horses purchased by me in 1839, were condemned by a Committee in such terms as exposed me to censure of the Board of Directors; yet they earned for themselves such a reputation in the service which obliged the Madras Government so much that they retracted all their condemning remarks."

The same is to be said of Havelock's condemned horses. Capt. Gall in a report to the Adjutant General at Madras, writes: "Out of the 44 horses purchased by the late Col. Havelock in 1837 and which were disapproved of at first sight and distributed amongst the Dragoons, Horse Artillery and Native Cavalry in the Bombay Presidency, no fewer than 37 were actually present in the ranks after having done eleven years of service.

(84) *Cape Monthly Vol. IV. 1858.*

(85) *Bluebooks of 1858.*

Another very amusing blunder of these notorious tribunals is instanced by Col. Bower: "two horses in a certain batch were condemned as 'mad', spavined in both hocks and absolutely unfit;" these very two horses turned out to be, after the effects of their voyage had been overcome and their bruises healed, "the famous Sir Benjamin and Battledore with whose performance all India became familiar."

Let us listen to just one more authority on a question which at the same time shows to what kind of material the Cape remount was forced to give way and to realize all the better what South Africa has lost by her neglect of so efficient an animal.

"Sir Walter Gilbey states on the authority of General Wheeler and others who had the opportunity of appreciating the evils of warfare in having guns horsed with brutes that could not be depended upon. "Even the best of them (the Indian stud breeds and Australian Walers) are often too bad tempered and of insufficient substance that when they meet with any obstacle they cannot immediately surmount, they become sulky and will not renew the effort \* \* \* \* in short had an annual draught of 500 horses from the Cape been established six years ago, as might have been done, great would by this time have been the saving of public money; for to whatever presidency the Cape horses would have been allotted, efficiency would have been proportionately improved especially in Bengal by getting rid of some of the rubbish. \* \* \* \* They were as bad in the Afghan war when "no description of horses in the artillery of Sir John Keene's army so disgraced himself in the ranks as that on which the Indian Government studs have expended so much money to produce. The horses of these studs have been proved beyond all comparison, the most worthless garrons with which the public service has ever been encumbered."'<sup>86</sup>

When the Crimean War broke out in 1854 several of the Cape-horsed Cavalry regiments were ordered to the front and the Cape horses acquitted themselves admirably in that most trying campaign. "Captain Wilder marched from Suez to Cairo and landed in the Crimea with the 10th. Huzzars mounted on Cape horses that must have been from fifteen to sixteen years old at least, yet they gave the highest satisfaction."'<sup>87</sup>

(86) *Montgomery Martin, Racing Calendar 1885.*

(87) *Papers relating to the purchase of horses for cavalry service in India. Bluebooks 1875.*

In all the campaigns in which the Cape horse has been used the size was the only complaint, his capability of endurance and all other points have been such as to gain the praise of almost every officer in the army both in India, the Crimea and at home in the several Kaffir wars. Yet these horses gaining such wonderful reputation, often as "condemned" horses, were boycotted in every possible way and the remarks quoted above and taken from the writings of men of considerable experience will in some measure explain one of the causes of the decline of horse breeding in South Africa.

It is contended by numerous cavalry officers and other experienced men of that period that in spite of the harm done by the speculator type of remount there are thousands of first class remounts in the Colony and especially in the neighboring independencies (the old republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal) and if the proper methods were adopted there would have been less disgrace to the British arms in India and less deterioration of the breed in South Africa.

This contention is quite correct; for the period when the average good remount was getting scarcer in the Colony, the other Provinces were just opened up and were in the heyday of pastoral farming and troops were running about in an almost wild state. They were descendents of the Cape stock which the farmers brought along with them when they emigrated in thousands from the Cape Colony in 1836-38. \* \* \* \* \*the period when the breed of horses in the Cape was considered to be in its zenith. Besides this, some of the most famous stallions found their way to these studs when the interest in horse breeding was on the wane in the old colony, being undermined as we have seen by the importation of worthless stallions and the mean dealings of the Indian Remounts Committee.

In searching for reasons for the decline of the industry we should also bear in mind, as a certain writer in the *India Sporting Review* rightly remarks, that "the Cape at that time was not peopled with Anglo-Saxons teaming with the inherent love of trade as we find them in the Australian colonies \* \* \* \* \*A boer, loves a bit of horse dealing and can make a bargain with any man; but he will run no risks, nor trust his property out of sight until he fingers the quid pro quo." Time and the working of an established agency under the direction of men like Col. Apperley and Col. Bower would have developed any latent enterprise there might have existed among the



great breeders; but the blunders of the India Remount Committee and the speculators forstalled this very plausible idea and increased the calamities that were undermining this branch of our pastoral farming.

This lack of trading enterprise is justly condemned. Too often is the average South African farmer contented to get rid of his produce—wool, feathers, slaughter cattle, horses, fruit, etc, to a middle man at much inferior prices. One reason is, perhaps, that he is too rich or at least considers himself so, and he does not make the least exertion to get the best prices for his goods; this was particularly the case in pre-war days. After the war, matters had in many cases to be altogether reorganized and the want that was caused by the war has placed many enterprises on a surer and more business-like footing.

Besides the above mentioned causes there were others that were as strong and at that time probably less controllable by man than the blunders and prejudices of the Indian authorities and the mistakes of bad selection of stallions and mismanagement on the part of the farmers.

Since the year 1854 the periodic visitations of horse sickness seems to have increased in severity; for during that year and the following over 65,000 horses and mules out of 169,583 were swept away.<sup>88</sup> In 1870 in the midst of all the difficulties of the Indian trade another 70,000 were carried off; and so these periodic visitations claimed its heavy toll from time to time, making another great sweep in 1891-3, of over 100,000 horses and mules, or almost 1/5 of the total number of horses and mules which is given as 540,492. With misfortunes like these it is no wonder that horse-breeding was carried on in a listless manner; still with better methods of feeding and shelter much of the disease's severity could have been avoided. Further details on this side of the question will be discussed in another chapter.

In the meantime other occupations in the pastoral farming have been coming up rapidly, and when these series of mishaps and drawbacks occurred in one branch, all attention was given to these new industries which gave good returns and were fast becoming a very safe and lucrative investment. Many of the great horse breeders think that the deterioration of the Cape horse is solely due to

(88) *Statistics for the year 1854.*

(89) *Statistics for the year 1891.*

the rise of these new industries; for the horses were neglected; they were consequently an easier prey to the disease and this shattered all hopes of regaining the trade with India.

The wool industry was introduced at an early date at the Cape, but the flocks of the indigenous sheep were large and were given preference to an imported animal which was considered of inferior food value and not half so hardy.

In 1793 Spanish Merino rams from the royal flocks of George III were imported and although there was much opposition against this new undertaking by the conservative farmers, it soon developed quite favorably and spread very fast over the Colony.

In 1854, the period when the trade in remounts was fairly well developed and horse-breeding was very successful, the number of pure-bred wool sheeps was 3,788,436 and the number of ordinary and mixed breeds 1,766,817. During the next decade, as we know, horse-breeding received its severest knocks and the wool sheep industry at the end of that decade showed a wonderful increase. The number of pure-breds have almost trebled and have even had the effect of decreasing the number of half-breds by over 100,000.

The Industry developed very rapidly and spread beyond the borders of the Colony into the Orange Free State, Transvaal and Natal.

It is interesting to note here that Australia obtained some of the pure-bred sheep imported in 1793, since the farmers were not anxious to attempt an undertaking they knew nothing about. Twenty-nine of these, rams and ewes went to establish the finewool industry in Australia, and to-day she produces about five times as much wool as we do \* \* \* \* \* But then she is "the only nation sprung from glorious peace" and South Africa has for centuries been at the mercy first of hordes of thieving and murdering natives and swarms of wild animals and secondly of bad Government, aggressive wars and devastating diseases. In spite of all this the wool industry of South Africa is the only one that shows a remarkable increase whereas all other countries are on the decrease.

Two other farming industries must still be mentioned as growing out of the fallen reputation of our excellent horse and flourishing at his expense; they will increase and sweeten our consolation for what we have lost in other fields; for we stand pre-eminent in them.

---

(90) Robert Wallace, "*Farming Industries of the Cape Colony.*" 1896.

In 1840 a number of Angora goats were imported from Angora in Asia and were crossed with the native "blinkhaar" goat of the country and this cross was ennobled by the importation of a few purebreds and improved by selection. The Industry developed rapidly and very soon the Angora flocks of the great Karroo plains were the finest and largest in the world.

Twenty years later, in the early sixties, Ostrich farming was taken up seriously. A few years ago some of the wild birds were tamed and by intelligent selection, mating and good management, the South African bird very soon reached a high standard of breeding and a very profitable industry was opened up. Within twenty years from its establishment it has captured the world's market.<sup>92</sup>

In both these farming industries the Union is far ahead of any other country, and although they stand on airy stilts that may at any time be overthrown by the caprices of the fashion makers they have brought a large amount of wealth in the land and have had a good influence on farming and agricultural matters in general. Should they at any time collapse, the gap will and can be easily filled up; for the pastures now occupied by the large flocks of Angoras are as good for the Merino and the Cape horse and those localities given up to the Ostrich are the richest lands in the whole Union and can be put to as good advantage.

This is in short the history of those farming industries which in their rapid growth helped to push horse breeding in the background and even caused its neglect and decline. It is quite clear that they have more than made up for the losses suffered in the trade with India in remounts; but it is difficult to see why the other branches of Agriculture should be neglected, they might have been reduced, but their neglect was certainly not the best policy and neither the Government nor some of the best farmers have taken this view and there is yet hope for the reestablishment of the Cape Horse. In that great land, with its wonderful pastures, glorious climate, liberal and enterprising Government, with an Agricultural Department, Agricultural Schools and Experiment Stations fully equipped by efficient men there is no reason why all the different agricultural pursuits of the people cannot flourish side by side. This is all the more possible since the union of the four states and

(91) *Bluebooks and Census Returns. 1840 etc. Cape Town and London.*

(92) *Dr Cecil Bergh, Zür Oeconomische Entwicklung der Straussenzucht in Südafrika. Leipzig 1914.*



after the war has cleared away barriers that were supposed to have been in the way.

There are besides these factors still some others which have not only had an effect on South African farming industries, but has effected the world at large and have to some extent revolutionized the world's trade at the time.

In 1869 the Suez Canal was opened up for traffic, and the Cape and other South African ports that up to then were the great half way stations on the trade routes between Europe, America and the East, saw themselves all of a sudden forsaken by the usual calls of the trading fleets and consequently lost a large amount of direct trade with these countries.<sup>93</sup>

This occurrence effected the trade in remounts with India considerably; for horses could be procured from European countries in the same amount of time and at the same prices, if not cheaper.

Last but not least in this eventful history of the decay and degeneration of a once flourishing and most promising industry is the discovery of the world's richest diamond and gold mines.<sup>94</sup>

In 1870, the year generally taken when horse-breeding had lost its prestige and standard of the previous five or six decades, the diamond fields were discovered and had a large share in the withdrawing of the farmers' attention. For some time it stimulated the breeding of cattle very much, for all the heavy machinery had to be transported by the ox-wagons; but even this was in its turn superseded by the railway. Railway lines were creeping very fast from the various seaports to the great mining centers and with the subsequent building of numerous branch lines other modes of conveyance were overshadowed—the ox-wagon soon became an object of the past and the light horse-wagon which was the pride of those days became rarer and was followed first by the elegant Cape-cart and more recently of course by the motor-lorry and automobile.

These changes, however, were bound to come and the great secret in order not to be harmed by them, is to adjust the several farming industries in such a way that no one is outbalanced by the other or exists at the expense of another.

The best and most efficient methods should be adopted in order to cope with the demands and needs of an ever increasing and

---

(93) *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Vol. XXIV.

(94) *History of Gold Mining Industry*. "The Transvaal" British Association for the advancement of Science. 1905.

specializing field of competing industrial activity. To this end a good education, tempered by experience is generally recognized the world over to be the greatest factor in giving the individual and the nation that competence and power which will attempt to have all the payable resources of the land work together as one harmonious whole for the welfare of the community at large.

#### (d) PRESENT TIME.

Up to this stage we have, for convenience sake, considered the history of horse-breeding as falling into three periods, or rather discussed it under three different aspects, which were marked by important occurrences. The period covering its origin and steady growth dates from 1652. It comprises the importation of horses from Java, Persia, Arabia, North and South America, the capture of some stallions from Spain and the first importation of English blood horses. It closes in 1820 with the importation of large numbers of some of the best Thoroughbreds. A new period of very marked development set in and was sadly interfered with by the importation of large numbers of a much inferior type of sire in 1870 and after, when the period of general deterioration and neglect began and dragged on in spite of the efforts made to suppress it, until the end of the century.

The Anglo-Boer war (1899-1902) is another occurrence that had a great effect on horse-breeding and fittingly divides its history into another period, which runs up to the present time.

Had we spoken of a general deterioration of the breed in the preceding generation, we almost had no horse to speak about in the beginning of this one. The sweeping movements made after the first great defeats of the British forces and aiming at the starving out of the Boer forces, had collected troops of brood mares and foals together with large flocks of sheep and other stock and destroyed them with machine guns.

The old Republics naturally bore the brunt of the war although the neighboring colonies had a fair show of it too. Statistics of pre-war days are very scarce and unreliable, especially in the old Republics. In 1914 the first collection of a complete Census of the agricultural industries of the Union would have been made,<sup>95</sup>

(95) Cf. *Editorial Notes. Agricultural Journal of the Union of South Africa.* No. 6, Vol. VI. 1913.

but the World War, which has also dragged South Africa into its coils has of course forstalled this plausible and most necessary undertaking.

From statistics available, the extent of destruction caused by the war is realized in some measure. The Census Returns of 1904 showed that the number of horses and mules in the Cape Colony to have been 419,963, a number less than that of thirteen years ago (1891) and given as 444,147. If this was the state of affairs in the Cape Colony, that of the two old Republics can easily be guessed. The Census Returns of 1911 showed a still further decrease in the Cape Colony and gave the number of horses in that colony as 381,021; this decrease, however, can be explained to some extent by the fact that the old Republics bought large numbers of horses in the Colony after the war and that some 9000 horses and mules were exported to German South West Africa during the Herero war as well as the exportation of breeding stock beyond the Union's border, Portuguese territories and Rhodesia.<sup>96</sup>

This wholesale destruction of the horse material was all the more a pity since the old Republics took up horse-breeding very seriously ever since their origin and establishment in 1845 and continued to breed good horses when the Colony neglected their studs.

As has been mentioned before, agricultural statistics are scanty and often unreliable. Agricultural institutions were in their infancy and the Census Returns often very incomplete, owing to the returns of some districts coming in late and the inclusion at one time and the exclusion at another of the native territories and also the frequent changing of the census areas.

In the old Republics matters of this kind were worse and we have to gather our sources from circumstantial evidences and side-lights. The government was established on simple yet effective lines and has been declared by great statesmen and scholars of constitutional governments as being a model institution, which suited a pastoral people excellently and afforded them the best contentment, assistance and happiness. Sir James Bryce considered the government of the Orange Free State a model one and remarks that "these simple Free State farmers were wiser in their simplicity than some of the philosophers who at divers times planned and

(96) *Bluebooks giving census Returns of 1891, 1904, 1911.*  
*Also Estimates\*\*\*\*\*Exports, etc. 1904-1909.*



framed governments for nascent communities \* \* \* \* \* The Orange Free State government has merits not to be found either in the American or the British system of constitutional government \* \* \* \* \* But though wisdom is justified of all of her children, she cannot secure that her children shall survive the shocks of arms.<sup>97</sup> With such a government there is sufficient reason to believe that the several pastoral industries received every attention and were in a flourishing state even if there was no organized body especially directing them.

In those days Agricultural Societies were the only organized institutions that stimulated the progress of farming in general and were subsidised by the government, who contributed on the pound sterling for pound sterling principle. In the Transvaal (South African Republic) the executive voted £10,000 for the advancement of agricultural affairs annually and later increased this amount considerably. Every year a Congress was held in one of the great centers and matters were discussed, new schemes were planned and undertaken for the advancement of farming throughout the state. The executive Bureau of this Congress reported to the Government who took a lively interest in the doings of these institutions and gave it every assistance.<sup>98</sup>

In 1899 the first attempt was made in the Orange Free State to establish an Agricultural Department and its officers were entrusted to several of the most experienced farmers and a small trained staff to organize the department; the war, however, forstalled their plans. After the war bygoness were very soon allowed to remain bygoness and Briton and Boer settled down together and very soon matters assumed their usual tenor. Most of the men responsible before the war were once more called upon to investigate matters and in 1903 the Orange River Colony Department of Agriculture was established. On the details and its later development will be explained later on, it sufficeth, however, to stipulate the headliness of their aims and proposed field of activity, which is more or less that of the whole Union to-day. The department will call into life:

- (1) Stud farms for the direct benefit of stock breeders.
- (2) Experimental farms where useful experiments could be

(97) *Sir James Bryce. Orange Free State 1901.*

(98) *Transvaal Agricultural Journal No. 3, 1902.*

carried out in stock breeding and other problems effecting farming industries.

(3) Educational centers for young men and Bureaus of Information for the older inhabitants.<sup>99</sup>

This colony then possessed 103,731 horses, part of it was of the original stock and part of it was largely imported from the Cape Colony and Natal as well as from other parts of the world. From time to time stallions were obtained from the neighboring districts of the Cape Colony and there is reason to believe that many of the imported Thoroughbreds of fame found their way in the pre-war days. The famous stallion Turpin is an example of this. He was later sold to a Natal farmer.<sup>100</sup> Champagne Charlie or rather his progeny was a household word in the Boshof district. Good sires were also obtained from the large studs in the Colony and Free State breeders were proud to possess a "Hantam", "van Zyl", "Kotze" or "Oosthuizen" bred stallion or pair.

There is a very interesting "talk" in the first volume of the Natal Agricultural Journal of 1898 by Mr. Charles Barter, one of the first horse-breeders in that Colony. His remarks are very valuable as they give us a view of the state of affairs immediately before the war and something about the origin and development of horse-breeding in Natal. "Natal has proved itself a fit home for the Thoroughbred and certainly less adapted to the coarser equine breeds. Let us then follow nature. Let us leave heavy draught to the railroad and traction engine and the most longsuffering of creatures the trekox; and in breeding horses for draught let us try to make compactness of form, symmetry, sound limbs and feet and supple action supply the absence of weight and bulk."

Mr. Barter's people owned the first Thoroughbred imported into Natal in 1860; and remarks that there were few good horses like Mortimer in the colony, because the old-colony breeders who known the value of a really good horse and is generally willing to pay for it gets the benefit of our good judgement and luck and thus a chance of real improvement such as may not be offered again for many years is lost to the colony, or at least to the present generation."

Tables were, however, turned and after the Cape Colony be-

(99) *First Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture of the Orange River Colony (1904-5)*.

(100) *Natal Agricultural Journal Vol. VII, 1904*.

came mixed up with the Indian Authorities and their wool-sheep farming the neighboring independences and Natal had the benefit of the best sires in the land. "Such worthies as Warwick, Jovial Boy, Tom Tug, Turpin and many others went to improve the stock of brood mares beyond the Colony's borders." However, even Natal as well as the old republics were effected by several causes that brought about the deterioration of the horse in the Colony. In Natal this was largely due to the changed conditions of life, brought about by the contraction of farms, better roads and locomotive power. This falling off was more marked in the riding-horse. "The class of horse the Uys Bros., Mr. Botha and later Mr. Boshoff and others used to breed and quickly disposed of from £15 to £25 would not attract many purchasers now. No one cares to ride eighty or one hundred miles with perhaps an extra horse cantering by his side; still fewer are they who make from point to point across country, over mountains, and through dense forests and swift flowing streams." So we find that even in these Provinces the horse material was getting less efficient; but we are assured that the general standard was a high one. Mr. Barter assures us that had the horses he rode and drove found their way into the stables of the great horse-breeders in England they would "most certainly have been reserved to mount special favorites and considered a long sight too good to be knocked about by the average University man."

In an article on "Progress in agriculture since Union" the under-secretary, Mr. P. J. du Toit makes the following remarks under the heading "Horses and Mules": "We have no means of ascertaining from the point of view the numbers the advance made in horse-breeding since Union. The increase between the years 1904 and 1911, however, has been sixty percent., from 449,539 to 719,414."

"We have a long way to go by way of improving the quality, though the steady effort in this direction made—in those parts of the Union most denuded of horses during the war—by the importations of blood stock by the government and private individuals and the continuous importations by the established breeders of the older parts of the Union, have made a perceptible difference. The keener rivalry at our principal agricultural shows is proof of this."<sup>101</sup>

(101) *Agricultural Journal of the Union of South Africa*. Vol. VI, 1913.



After the war tens of thousands of horses amongst which number a large amount of mares were sold to the farmers by the military authorities, they represented a polyglot collection from almost every part of the world and the greater majority of these were inferior even to the average Cape Horse as the Official Remount Report issued after the war will show. Extracts from this report will in some measure give an estimation of a large bulk of the material that went to build up the industry after the war.

“Generally a good compact, true made, bigbarrelled horse on short legs with a certain amount of quality of any nationality except the Argentine—which must have some horrible strains of blood in his veins—did well.”<sup>102</sup>

South Africans: There were very few South Africans that can be called horses except from Natal; but whenever we did get one, he was the best. A hard, wiry, wellbred animal, very quiet and able to take care of himself on the veld and in the line on the worst of forage and water.

Australians: The animals were disappointing on the whole. The typical Waler was of course light on the leg, ewe-necked and angular. The draft horse was a positive scandal.

Canadians: Many were barouche horses; high on the leg and slack corn made animals, possessed of some quality.

Hungarians: They were strong little animals, full of quality but failures and universally condemned as “flateachers.”

Indians: The country horse is too soft and excitable and very little good for campaigning. The Arabs and Walers from India were excellent, nothing could beat the Arab.

Americans: Varied greatly, many were capital light cavalry horses with great substance and quality.

British: The general superiority of the British over the other imported animals is greatly due to his having been habitually corn fed and regularly worked before embarkation. He is truer made and rounder ribbed. For draft purposes he was excellent; but for riding many were too long in the leg.

A similar report is given for cobs and in that company the Cape Horse and his types held their own as well as among the horses.

“The South African cob is unsurpassed for Mounted Infantry work. They are hardy, active animals, require no care, they live

(102) *Transvaal Agricultural Journal*, Vol. I. *Official Remount Report 1901-2*.

on the scantiest rations and are very quiet. On the veld they are as sure-footed as goats. Their paces are a slow canter and a shuffling walk. The Basuto pony is the best of all."

This extract in short describes the stock that was left to South Africa after the war; for the farmers bought the remaining horse material of the British forces and amongst these were a large number of mares. Thousands of breeding stock have also been imported from abroad and unluckily most of the horses were imported from the Argentine, owing to low prices. These horses were the worst the British Army had used and their influence was not at all satisfactory; but the people were exhausted by the disastrous effects of the war and beggars cannot choose. But things righted themselves very soon. The larger part of the 3,000,000 pounds sterling paid by Great Britain to the Republics as part of the conditions of the Peace of Vereniging went to rehabilitate the farming industries. The Governments of the old Republics placed large sums of monies at the disposal of the farmers on very easy terms for the purpose of buying pure-bred sheep and other live stock in the Cape Colony or imported from abroad.

The great reputation the Cape Horse once more gained on the field of battle and general campaign duty seemed to have attracted horse breeders' attention anew and its breeding and improvement became one of the most serious interests throughout South Africa.

The great horse breeders of the Hantam of ancient fame collected as many of the old stock as they could lay hands on and some of the best Thoroughbred stallions were imported from England.

Dr. F. D. McDermott, Director of the Cape Agricultural Department giving a full description of the various great studs in this region three years after the war, makes the following remarks on the breeding stock: "The class of mare mostly bred from here is the colonial type, as much as possible on the line of the old Hantam animal, but it has been so difficult to secure this type of mare since the war, that the old Hantam horse seems to be almost doomed. It is to be hoped that with all the new blood in the district we shall soon have a new Hantam horse with the characteristics of the old one and a few improvements. Soil and climate have a great deal to do with horse-breeding so that there is no reason to fear that what has been done before cannot be done again."<sup>103</sup>

(103) *F. D. McDermott. Rural Cape Colony. Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope. Vol. XXVII, 1905.*

In the Southern parts of the Cape Colony the old studs in the Robertson, Montagu and Malmesbury districts, horse-breeders have also reorganized their general breeding stock. In 1905 Dr. Hutch-  
eon, Chief Veterinary Surgeon for the Cape Colony found that  
“there was a marked improvement in all classes, especially in horses. Two helpful features were to be noticed. First, the presence of a fine class of brood mares; and secondly, the number of promising youngsters. “Whatever the breeders do they should keep as near as possible to the original stock.”<sup>104</sup>

There is perhaps no other country where farming is so general. Quite a number of very rich men have taken up land in the great horse-breeding districts and have their studs and racing stables there. Especially in the Colesburg district, which was the recognized home of some of the finest equine stock South America could boast. With the advent of men like Sir Abe Bailey, Nourse, Homan, Robertson, Rissik and many others the district seems to have a future of greater brilliancy than its past in the line of horse-breeding.<sup>105</sup> No other district can probably show so many wealthy farmers and land owners—more and more the wealth of the gold and diamond mines is being spent on these studs and the development and improvement of the Cape horse. The advent of new men with new methods is sure to cause some change in the smaller communities; but the ultimate results will be for the good of the land.

The methods of management and selection are of the best. The sires are of the best Thoroughbred strains. Fuller will be dwelt upon these important factors in another chapter on private studs.

From these several remarks we find that the modern tendencies all aim at regaining the glories of the past. A great effort is being made to establish firmly a breed of horses that came as near perfection as any other old established breed; but it has been rudely interfered with by great catastrophes which to-day can be made harmless, thanks to the advancement of scientific knowledge in checking and overcoming diseases and teaching practical and economic methods which bring progress and wealth in its practice.

---

(104) *Dr. Hutch-  
eon. Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope. Vol. XXVI 1905.*

(105) *Rural Cape Colony. Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope. Vol. XXVI. 1905.*



## CHAPTER II.

### METHODS IN BREEDING AND MANAGEMENT OF HORSES IN THE UNION.

The methods practised in the rearing and management of horses in South Africa are very simple and primitive yet very effective. They conform to the natural order of things. The horses are reared in the open, they provide for themselves except in droughts and poor seasons and enjoy that vitality and stamina which is the birthright of the wild troop, subjected only to man's will and the laws of nature which are most favorable to the strong and merciless to the weak.

In the beginning of its history horse-breeding was for a time conducted on European lines, that means the animals were kept at stable during nights and for the greater part of the day, owing to the numerous wild animals and thieving hordes of natives that prowled about. In 1654 the only stallion then at the Cape was torn to pieces by lions in broad day-light and under the very nose of the fort's cannon.<sup>1</sup> Frequent mention is also made of elaborate stabling and provisions for the horses owned by the Company, and this method was adopted by the farmers since 1665 when through the first public sale of horses by the Company they undertook horse-breeding as a new undertaking in their agricultural and pastoral pursuits.<sup>2</sup>

This state of affairs must have been in practice for over a century, for the 18th century was well advanced before the great hinterland beyond the several mountain ranges of the Drakenstein and the Eastern districts of Swellendam and Graaf-Reinet were opened up.

As the flocks of sheep increased and with them the troops of horses and herds of cattle the farmers moved more inland to find fresh pastures and since the great pastoral system of farming came in vogue, all additional feeding and stabling were discarded.:

Agricultural implements were primitive, the wooden plow was only dispensed with in the beginning of the 19th century and such

(1) *Jan van Riebeeck. "Dagverhaal van" 1652-1662.*

(2) *Archives of the Cape of Good Hope. 1652-1795.*

cultivation of cereals as was done at the time was only sufficient to supply the family with the necessary food and bread.<sup>3</sup> Thus the troops of horses were left to forage for themselves on the almost limitless pastures. Valuable stallions, such as mentioned in previous pages and imported before 1800, costing as much as 3000 thaler were naturally offered the best stabling and care. This state of affairs was a most ideal one for the breeding of excellent animals; with plenty of feed on boundless pastures the little harm done by the few severe winter months in stunting the growth and ultimately the size was generally overcome by breeding from pure-bred sires of good size and weight; but with the limiting of pastures, however, and breeding from inferior stallions, new methods were required to deal with new conditions and altered circumstances. Unfortunately with few exceptions it has been a case of doing as grandfather and father did and the glories of those days have not dawned again.

The earliest accounts of this branch of the South African pastoral farming are found in the valuable volumes of Lichtenstein. "stabling," says this authority, "is out of the question, horse-thefts are unknown in the north-western regions and the horses run on the pastures day and night. Every fortnight the troop is rounded up and counted. Now and then a foal falls a prey to hyneas (wolves) and many a horse shows signs that it had a bad time at the claws of some wild animal or other. This locality"—comprising to-day the districts of Calvinia, Victoria, West, Richmond, Colesberg, Hanover, etc., and then known as the old and new Hantam districts—"is eminently suited for the rearing of horses, as it is a high plateau region with never failing streams and rolling pastures of excellent grass. The high altitude of several of the flat-topped hills is also a safeguard against the destructive disease that periodically sweeps over the land and raises great havoc among the troops of horses in other localities."<sup>4</sup>

He further mentions that large studs of over 300 horses are of frequent occurrence both in the northern and southern districts and that the stallions generally are very fine animals being "either imported English blood horses or Arabs. The methods in practice all over the country are those of a free stud and the appearance of the

(3) Robert Wallace. "*Farming Industries in the Cape Colony*" 1896.

(4) Heinrich Lichtenstein. "*Reisen in Südlichen Afrika 1798-1806*"

excellent foals bids fair for the future of the horse-breeding in these localities.”

The general use of the horse-wagons and the management of the team of six or eight neat geldings or stallions is a theme on which he waxes eloquent. “All European art of driving is put in the shade by the dexterity of the average colonial driver. In full trot or gallop he holds complete command over the ropes and even misses every stone or hole on the uneven way and this is the more astounding since he never makes use of the assistance of the driver at his side who wields a long whip.

In this manner the sharpest corners are rounded with ease. I myself have been driven by a bastard Hottentot in a wagon drawn by fourteen fiery steeds under the very eyes of the Governor and through the narrow streets of the camp on the banks of the Liesbeeks River without the slightest hitch and in great style. This skillfulness is so common that the people are surprised if any mention is made of it at all.”

Burchell who travelled South Africa extensively twenty years later corroborates these remarks of Lichtenstein.<sup>5</sup> This method of travelling was very common up to the close of the last century.

Lichtenstein speaking of horse-breeding before 1800 remarks that no horses were bred for racing but that spirited young horses and wagon teams were very common. Breeding for these purposes then have been the aim of the average horse-breeder of the 18th century. They certainly attained a very high standard. The wagon team and all its outfit has gained the approbation and praise of every foreign explorer and writer. These ideals were later overshadowed by breeding for racing and were taken up by the new republics in the north that practically repeated and adopted the colonizing methods of the older colony.

There are no fixed methods in the use of stallions during the breeding season; very valuable stallions are continually kept at stable, they are well cared for and are given all the exercise and attention they merit and are used to their utmost in the breeding season, often covering as many mares as they want to. Generally the troop is rounded up and the stallion is let loose in a paddock with half a dozen mares for the day. This method is assorted to because the mares are generally unbroken and owing to their free

(5) Burchell “*Travels in the Interior of South Africa 1820-22.*”



run on the veld they are fairly wild. When the stallion is a very valuable one and not thoroughly acclimatised this method is considered to be the least risky. South African bred stallions get some extra feeding and grooming only for some period before the breeding season and as soon as the first foals are dropped the stallion is allowed to run with the troop and do his two-fold duty, covering the mares and protecting the foals against possible attacks of smaller wild animals or mules;— especially was this the case in the days when wild animals were more numerous—mules too were considered to afford excellent protection against the smaller wild animals, but it has been found that the excessive love of the mule for foals and his too hard caresses have cost the farmer the loss of many a good foal and to-day mules are not allowed to run in the same camp with young foals.

In the ordinary stud the stallion used is generally selected from the troop of a breeder whose reputation as a breeder of excellent horses has been gained by the performances of individuals of his stud. He is the owner of one or more imported stallions the high repute of which has been based solely on the quality, conformation and performances of their progeny. To the average farmer, particularly of the earlier days, a high pedigree and race course records were so many mere words; a stallion was judged by his offspring and its capabilities—it was deeds not words they wanted even from their horses, and it is due to these sensible and efficient methods of selection that horse-breeding could withstand the shock it received three-quarters of a century later, when in 1860 numbers of worthless brutes found their way to many of the studs solely on the merit of high pedigrees and race course records, overlooking the fact that was borne in mind so well during the past two centuries, that a brilliant turf record and high sounding pedigree are no guarantees of what a horse will do at stud, especially for breeding useful animals.

These methods conducted on such natural lines, would, when carried on with some intelligent system of selection and management on sufficient pastures and abundant fresh water supplies, combine within itself all that could be desired for the ideal and successful rearing of a good horse; but unfortunately these methods were not combined with sufficient attention and intelligence and where the troop has been allowed too much freedom deterioration of the stock in general has been the result.

The stallions running with the troop all the year round, would cover the young mares at too tender an age, and the colts being allowed to run too long before castration are also responsible for a great deal of damage. In the scanty winter months and during periods of droughts the young stock and the brood mares are half starved with the result that they are stunted in growth. Hence the universal praise of the hardiness and all-sufficiency of the Cape horse, but the general complaint of its small size and bad conformation.

Generally thirty mares are allotted to one stallion in good condition; but very frequently this number is very much exceeded, especially if the stallion has a high reputation. Young mares are not served before the third year and the great breeders prefer waiting until the fourth year.

The foals are dropped on the veld and aid at birth is very seldom required. In all my experience I do not remember a single instance of this case on any of our farms or on those of our neighbors. "Inflammation of the naval and foal-lameness so common in Europe and other countries are unknown troubles in South Africa. In a good year a farmer may reckon on 55% increase to his troop," or 95% of a season's crop of foals.<sup>6</sup>

After 1860 when the wool-sheep and Angora goat farming has been well established and the Cape horse was gradually being pushed on a back shelf, the limitless pastures were naturally limited. Most of the farms were fenced in and although they generally contained 10,000 to 30,000 acres, still with thousands of sheep, cattle and horses the pasturages could not feed all. There were no opportunities as of old to move to new pastures unless the farmer emigrated to the new republics. Circumstances like these called for more intensive farming. The shortage of food must be supplied in some way or other; instead of this the majority of farmers preferred and in many cases were forced to submit their flocks, cattle and horses to a course of starvation through the scanty winter months.

The effects of such a state of affairs on young stock can be well imagined. The horses were stunted in growth and the cattle although a very excellent breed mature only at the age of five or six years.

---

(6) Dr. O. Wegner. *Zur Kenntniss der Züdafrikanische Landwirthschaft*. 1906.

Experts and enterprising farmers advised and followed better methods in order to maintain the high standard of past decades. Colonel Apperley, a great authority on horse-breeding, speaking about the general neglect and indifference of most breeders says that "Every shoulder should be put to the wheel to develop and improve such a wonderful and only half-developed country. Horse-sickness can be avoided by erecting proper sheds for the mares and foals and growing fodder of some sort, roots or cereals to feed them on during the prevalence of the disease which only lasts two or three months—if the farmers do not think their horse stock worth this little expense and trouble they deserve to suffer and the Australians will ultimately deprive them of the Indian market." This was sound advice, but it fell on deaf ears or rather ears that listened only to the bleating of lambs and they suffered and lost all to the Australians who with their "fiddle-headed and soft-boned Walers" soon ousted the deteriorated Cape horse at the Indian market, or rather found their entrance there by the absence of a better article; for only two decades back the Cape horse called forth the highest encomium of almost every cavalry officer who had to deal with him in India and elsewhere.

The special conditions of South African travelling have called forth many inventions which were the creation of necessity and adaptation. The Cape cart is one of these and in various forms and styles it is to-day the most common vehicle in the country. It stands on a pair of fairly high wheels, is either a two or four-seater and is drawn by one or more pairs of horses, as the length of the journey or weight of the load demands. Another vehicle is the already mentioned horse-wagon or "Veer-wagen"—a light jolting wagon on springs, which developed into great efficiency and popularity during the latter part of the eighteenth century in the Cape Colony and was adopted by the new states when discarded by the old Colony. Almost every farmer owned one for the conveyance of his rather large family in the quarterly exodus to the district village for the celebration of the holy Communion. Every farmer vied with his neighbor in the possession of the best team, and it was a real delight to the lover of horses to see dozens of these light wagons roll into the village at the end of the week with their teams

---

(7) Reprint from *Racing Calendar of 1885 in Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope*. Vol. III.



of sixes or eights—bays, chestnuts, dapple greys and blacks—one could not make a choice. A week or two before the occasion the team gets its quarterly grooming and extra feeding to be quite fit for the thirty or forty mile trip. The home-coming is generally in great style—the pace is rapid and the representatives of the several studs are thoroughly put to the test; the speed increases with the milage covered and it is very seldom if ever that a team appears not as fresh after the journey of thirty miles as when they started over bad roads with a rest of only an hour on the way.

On a long journey frequent stoppages are made in order to breathe the horses but more particularly to allow the regular passage of urine, for if this precaution is overlooked a trouble known in South Africa as “through the water” may occur. This is occasioned by the swelling of the bladder and the paralyxing of the sphincter muscles, thus unabling the horse to pass its urine.<sup>8</sup>

This method of travelling has been gone into with some detail, for it certainly has been a great factor in the breeding of sound and beautiful animals possessing great stamina and endurance and is largely responsible for the large number of good horses in the independent states when the colony horses have deteriorated.

In those good old days and to a large extent to-day it was an unwritten code of honor that the team (specially called the “Nachtmaal span”—Communion team) should be perfect animals and that it was a disgrace to possess a team of “flauwkoppe” (weak hearts). It was thus the desire of every farmer to breed from the best stallion only and to give some attention to the selection of his brood mares.

With the increase of better means of conveyance and the appearance of good roads toward the middle of the 19th Century the wagon and team have largely been superceded by the “spider” and pair or four in hand. It is a light four-wheeler very much in use in the mountainous regions of Natal, eastern Transvaal and parts of the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony; but the Cape cart in its various forms is the ideal and most popular vehicle in the land. In the cities the vehicles present a motley collection from every part of the world—from the light Rickshaw of Durban, drawn by a giant Zulu boy in the queerest haberdashery to the London Hansom and the Arab or Malay driver who is as great a

---

(8) Cf. *Natal Agricultural Journal Vol. IV.*

“hustler” as the New York taxi-driver, and also these have their representatives only too numerous in all the large cities.

Out of this quarterly or even half-yearly get-together “at the church” many incidents of interest naturally arise; one of these is told in a highly amusing way by the Swedish traveller and explorer Karstrom and may be considered here only in the light of its effect on the method of improving the quality of the Cape horse.”

The young farmer has had the opportunity of meeting the young ladies of the district and having had his affection stolen away by a maiden often many miles away from his father’s farm, he naturally has to pay her the necessary calls. For this purpose the best horse of his father’s troop is selected, trained and groomed to perfection—for even up to quite recently a farmer’s standing was generally judged by his equipage or by his horse if he was on horse-back.

Thus every youth in the land is most particular on this part of his worldly possessions—his riding-horse, shooting pony and the carriage pair are amongst his dearest possessions; and there is a very effective saying amongst the farmers, that there are three things which a man should never lend out and that is his wife, his riding-horse and his rifle.

The wagon team, Cape cart and riding horse are given prominence here, because, many a well-to-do farmer pays too little attention to his equipage and frequently resorts to the ox-wagon when a team of neat geldings would not only have given greater speed and comfort but also saved time and multiplied the opportunities of making small trips either for business or pleasure.

The horse-team would be more in vogue, had we still those good light horse-wagons. To hitch a team of horses to the unwieldy ox-wagon is to add injury to insult, to say the least. The light trolly-wagon would be a great asset on the farm.

The great drawback to these teams are of course the problem of feeding. To buy feed on the way when it is not the general usage is too expensive. Wealthy farmers own automobiles but at the same time they always possess several good pairs of horses. Some smaller details deserve some mention here.

South African harness is decidedly better than most of the imported European make. Like almost everything else it is charac-

(9) H. Karstrom. “*A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope 1820.*”

teristic of the puritanical tastes of the people. It is unostentations yet durable and neat and is not made out of tanned leather sewn with cotton or flax that goes to pieces after several showers of rain on it and under the trying sub-tropical sun and dry air. The leather is prepared by a process of currying until it is pliant and soft, possessing an extreme flexibility and whiteness when properly prepared. The several parts are then cut out from the hide and sewn together with leather lacing prepared in the same way from the skins of certain antelopes and goats. With silver clasps and moderate trimming they decidedly add elegance to a fine pair of horses and greatly enhance the smartness and good style of any epuipage. Dr. Wegner, director of the East Prussian studs at Norden remarks amongst others in a report on South African Agricultural matters that: "the beautifully prepared harness made out of a chamois-dressed and oil-tawed white-leather could serve as an example to the stables of many a German estate."<sup>10</sup> The high price of this kind of harness, however, allows of the importation of a large quantity of a cheaper article.

The general habit of riding on horse-back and the many duties performed by their mounts have called forth many points that have influenced the breeding and management of the Cape horse.

Horse-back riding is universal, from boyhood to old age the South African farmer is acquainted with the saddle's seat; almost every girl one comes across is a perfect horse-woman and a man who cannot ride is a *rara avis* and if he is a farmer he is looked at with some contempt even by small boys.

Jan van Riebeeck, founder of white South Africa is probably the first horseman who enjoyed a canter along the slopes of the magnificent mountains of the Cape peninsula, fanned by the breezes of two oceans. Seated on his favorite charger the "Roode Vos" with his picturesque dress of the 17th Century—flowing ostrich plumes, gold embroidery and immaculate lace—it was considered that he would display the insignia of high office and lordship most effectively to the hordes of natives, who were awe-inspired at this mighty being riding on an animal they have never seen before.<sup>11</sup> Since those late autumn days of 1652 when van Riebeeck sported

(10) Dr. O. Wegner, "*Zur Kenntnisse der Südafrikanische Landwirtschaft*" 1906.

(11) Dr. E. C. Godeé-Molsbergen, "*Jan van Riebeeck, Stichter van Hollands Zuid Afrika, 1913.*"



his charger in the service of the state to the present day there is a close link between every farm boy or man and his pony or pair.

In the rounding up of cattle, on shooting expeditions, on long journeys over bad roads, on pleasure rides and even on the war path these same ponies are the inseparable and trusty friends of the South African.

The methods of breaking in young horses are unique. The foals are never meddled with and grow up in all the freedom and wild glory of foalhood until the third or fourth year when they meet their master to whose will they ultimately give way with that fidelity and willingness which has endeared the horse to man forever.

That excellent horseman, Captain Hayes, gives a very accurate description of the method. "The way in which horses are broken to saddle in South Africa is one which I have never seen practised in any other country. It is charmingly simple and has its good points as well as its bad ones. It consists in tying the head of the neophyte close up to that of a steady horse by means of a cord connecting the respective headstalls worn by the animals. After they have been both bridled and saddled the "schoolmaster" is first mounted and then another man gets on the young one who is powerless to buck or bolt on account of his head being fixed to that of the steady "schoolmaster." Besides this the fact of his being alongside another horse gives him confidence and no matter how wild he may be he will learn in a short time to carry his burden and regulate his pace according to that of his companion. As he settles down to work the connecting cord may gradually be loosened out until at last it can be taken off altogether. This is a capital plan if one has a good break-horse and if no better way is known."<sup>12</sup>

"The saddles used are wide towards the center and have a good dip in them \* \* \* \* the weight is sometimes very great and they are clumsy affairs. Riding is altogether different in South Africa as it is in Australia, Canada or America. The country is clear and open and jumping of necessity falls away. The "achterryder" has his proteges in the syce, mafoo or bettoe of India, China or Japan. Burchell when travelling in South Africa in 1820-22 also remarked upon this custom. The "achterryder" is an accompanying orderly or groom, who is to take care of the horses

(12) Captain M. H. Hayes. "*Among Horses in South Africa*.". 1900.

on a long journey; but as frequently he was an object of outward show.<sup>13</sup>

We find thus that the methods practised for the two centuries preceding 1860 were very simple and effective and made very small demands on extra feed and care as long as the conditions for such free studs were favorable, that is, when new pasturages and fresh streams of water were abundant. The good sense the farmers showed those days in the selection of their stallions, and their methods in training and managing their teams and riding-horses have done much to make that branch of their agricultural pursuits very efficient and valuable. With closer settlement, the fencing in of the farms and the increase of the flocks and herds of cattle, the facilities of the past gradually shrunk within the confines of the farm and in periods of drought and scarcity there were no new pastures to retreat to and the extra feed and water had to be supplied by the farmer; this demand has been considered extravagant; for the flocks of Merinos and Angoras were found to thrive well under conditions that are unfavorable to the successful rearing of horses—for horses frequently will not graze where other animals have browsed before—and owing to the loss of the Indian market for the usual supply of remounts and the comparatively more lucrative occupation of wool: sheep farming the horse-breeding industry was gradually being shifted on the back shelf.

This preference of other branches of pastoral farming at the expense of another, has been one of the most serious causes of the deterioration of the Cape horse.

Many hints and good advice have been given by the Government and eminent breeders and expert horsemen; but the stone was rolling and the Cape horse so efficient before this period and on which so much care and pride was bestowed in the past was left to work out his own salvation. In a few localities, here and there in the Colony as well as in the neighboring independencies, luckily, the standard of the previous decades was kept up and there is still good hope to have the number of good horses as plentiful, proportionately, as the number of good Merino sheep and valuable pedigree ostriches or Angoras.

With the advent of a new era in matters of agriculture, new machinery, new methods and new ideas, the order of things needs

(13) *William Burchell, "Travels in Southern Africa. 1822."*

must be modified and with an intelligent application of new methods to older and well tried ones there surely need be no overlapping of the several industries nor the exclusion of the one at the expense and detriment of the other; we should be more resourceful and wise enough to meet such demands as would be well worth the extra trouble. Whatever, though, we do, we should not omit those methods which have made the Cape Horse the equal and often a better in the company of any breed of horses when hardiness, endurance and stamina were called for. We should supply his just wants, without any cuddling and peppering which may tend to make him a "soft animal", like his brother in Europe and other countries, thereby making him more susceptible to disease than otherwise. He should be as much as possible a product of Nature. This is the lesson of the past that should not be forgotten when the new and very necessary methods become more general. Another lesson from the days when horse-breeding was in its zenith is the selection of stallions which after fulfilling all the ordinary requirements of pedigree, height, bone, conformation and race course records will also prove their sterling qualities in their offspring.

The gist of all the advanced arguments and propounded theories on the question of deterioration of the Cape Horse as far as they are concerned with the methods of improving the breed and have also been practised to some extent, may be summed up in the following sentences, giving extracts from articles written by various experts on the matter.

Veterinary Surgeon J. A. Nunn in a very interesting article advises that some extra feeding must be done during the scanty winter months. Special care should be given to the brood mares and foals; it is practically of no use to feed the two-year-olds when they have already been permanently stunted in growth by a course of starvation; they should be given some shelter during the severe cold weather of the worst winter months and well fed for the first two years and then allowed to take charge of themselves and increase that hardiness and stamina which are the chief characteristics of his breed.<sup>14</sup>

To resort to additional feeding for any length of time may not be practicable, not economical and too expensive; but it all depends

---

(14) *Reports on the Horse Supply of South Africa—Archives 1888.*



from what source the extra feed is obtained; if this has to be bought it is quite clear that the foal would not be able to pay his rent; but it so happens that the best horse breeding districts possess large tracts of arable land and these are not cultivated owing to the long distance from the railway and the consequent high cost of production; this land can with the application of the dryland system of cultivation be made to produce all the necessary extra supplies of feed, that are wanted for the successful rearing of a crop of excellent foals; and the mares themselves as well as the three-year-olds can be put to this work; the mares are tamed and this is always of decided advantage and the foals are all the better in getting accustomed to man and the general routine of the farmyard. Some good advice can be taken note of from the methods practised by our neighbors in German South West Africa, where they have given preference to the Cape Horse as foundation stock after having given a trial to almost every other breed. Putting aside the usual methodical precautions and practices which will be quite right in a stud in Germany but quite superfluous here; we can still pick up many a good hint.

Herr Schlettwein, one of the few and a very successful horse breeder advises that the mares should do their share of the **farm** work; a moderate amount of ploughing after the breeding season will do the brood mares every good; she is tamed and is easier handled and the wildness of the foals is gradually overcome. Besides developing the strength and general structure of the mare she also helps paying her keep by providing the extra food she and her foal require in scanty periods.

This is a practise which is quite overlooked in South Africa generally; very few mares are broken in and in the breeding season a troop is more difficult to handle than at ordinary times and this is undoubtedly one of the reasons why many of our methods in breeding and managing are so slipshod and careless and too often unsuccessful and unprofitable.

In his excellent book Schlettwein lays great stress on the selection of the breeding material and points out that the breeding of horses is of far greater importance than that of sheep or cattle; for ill-bred specimens of these can easily be disposed of to the butcher, whereas the badly bred horse lives to breed on or fails to find a market.<sup>15</sup> Most of the European and American fodder

---

(15) *Carl Schlettwein. "Die Farmer in Deutsch Südwestafrika 1909."*

grasses are grown with success as soon as the proper varieties for the various localities are fixed upon and it has been proved over and over by enterprising farmers in all the horse-breeding districts with a little extra attention and exertion sufficient extra food could be supplied very cheaply to carry the foals, brood mares and other young stock through the two or three severest winter months. With very little expense large hay stacks can also be made of the indigenous grasses, which in the height of the season are most luxuriant, and is very nutritive as a hay fodder—these haystacks are an excellent precaution against an unexpected drought, when the ordinary winter supplies run out. The famous studs of Malmesbury Robertson and Caledon are situated in the richest grain districts and the methods above described are in full practice and they have also gradually found an adoption in those districts that are in greater need of them, owing to the lower percentage of the annual rainfall; but there is yet room for vast improvement and some knowledge of economic farming and modern ideas and principles of intelligent manipulation of the various forces of agricultural wealth must be instilled into the minds of the rising generation. Thanks to the exertions of a wise and liberal Government things are moving in the right direction and great results have been and are being achieved.

Although man cannot change Nature's laws, he certainly can direct her forces to his advantage and minimize their severity, and the failure to realize this fact to a fuller extent has been the cause that every drought carries away hundreds of thousands of stock through starvation, when about half if not all of it could have been saved. To lose stock during the ordinary severe winter months is due to sheer neglect and such farmers deserve the censure if not the just contempt of their neighbors who do not lose any through want of food.

In these days of specialization it would be unwise to keep up a certain farming industry at the expense of others or where the requirements necessary for its successful upkeep cannot be met with by the natural resources on the locality.

Extensive and intensive systems of farming should be closely studied and the relative value of each compared in proportion to cost of production. We frequently come across farmers who put all their attention into a dairy herd when the nearest creamery or railway station is some twenty or thirty miles away; all extra

food supplies are given the dairy herd while his young stock, fine tollies and most promising foals are subjected to spare diet in order to get "quick returns" from the dairy—the tollies are three years late for the market and they are poor beef cattle even at that, while the promising foals run in a mob and find no market. Does the dairy make up for all this? This wise man keeps no diary along with his dairy and ignorance is bliss. Instances of this are unhappily too frequent and can only be rectified by education; happily the enterprise is there, extra feed is supplied but fed into wrong channels.

Horse-breeding should not be carried on where the natural and first requirements for the successful rearing of sound and useful animals are wanting. In the selection of a farm for horse-breeding, nothing can excel a limestone formation, as the water and grasses of such farms so situated contain a due proportion of those minerals so essential to the natural formation and development of bone.<sup>16</sup> Low marshy grounds are very unfavorable to the constitution of the horse, to the oriental or Thoroughbred type at least and tend to make him coarse, unwieldy and generally unsound. South Africa happily possesses large tracts of land containing these requirements in addition to the extremely dry air and a temperate climate and is eminently suited for horse-breeding—especially of the Arab and his kind who find there a second home under better grazing conditions and besides the Thoroughbred can no where else be bred to better perfection.

With the proper farm selected and thoroughly fenced and divided into separate camps—this is a sine qua non in practical and successful horse-breeding—proper accommodation must be provided for the stallions and good shelter for the mares during the cold winter months, for although well fed he will not grow and since this want of size is often the only complaint against our horses, the shelter from cold is an absolute imperative in order that every facility be given the young foal to grow. By these shelters are not meant the stabling of about two hundred and more of brood mares and foals; but such sheds as would give sufficient warmth on cold and frosty nights and can be made use of by the animals at their own

---

(16) Compare Dr. H. C. Hutcheon, *Chief Veterinary Surgeon and later Director of Agriculture for the Cape Colony. Ag. Jour. of Cape Colony 1906.*



pleasure and where sufficient hay and other feeds are in easy reach of the animals.

The districts in the Union best adapted by nature to the profitable rearing of horses are all the districts about the Cape peninsula, especially Malmesbury, Caledon, Swellendam Montague and Robertson; to the west and west central; the famous Bokkeveld (the old Hantam of the 18th Century) and the districts of the New Hantam of the early days of the 19th century and comprising to-day the districts of Colesberg, Hanover, Beaufort West, Prince Albert, Hopetown and all those districts bordering on the southern bank of the Orange river and east of the Colesberg district. In the east and south east; the districts of: Somerset East, Graaf-Reinet, Cradock, Middleburg, Tarka Stad and certain portions of Grikwaland East. Also portions of Grikwaland West, all of the Orange Free State Province, a greater portion of Natal Province, and all of those districts of the Transvaal Province bordering on the banks of the Vaal river. With very few exceptions these districts all lie in those localities which are underlaid by the geological strata of the Karroo beds which are generally rich in lime and produce very good grasses; with sufficient rainfall and succulent and nutritive shrubs and other plants in localities of smaller rainfall.<sup>17</sup>

"Few parts in the world are so well adapted by nature for the breeding of horses" as those just mentioned "and it is surprising that this industry, the most profitable branch of pastoral farming is not pursued on more defined lines by the average South African farmer—other countries may compete and beat us out of the field with wool. Also Mohair and Ostrich feathers are articles subject to the caprices of the leaders of fashion—and they are very capricious—and consequently liable to serious fluctuation in prices. But the demand for good horses is large and continuous and no country in the world can rear better horses and more economically than in these localities of the Union, where the dreaded disease of "roaring" is unknown and horse sickness seldom prevails and can be made absolutely harmless. In a well regulated stud I question if the last named disease would ever be heard of."<sup>18</sup>

Coming to more modern times we find that only those studs

---

(17) Grey Rattray. *Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope* Vol. XXXIII. Also Rogers and du Toit. "Geology of Cape Colony 1910."

(18) Grey Rattray. *Agricultural Jour. of the Cape of Good Hope*. Vol. XXXIII.

that are conducted by methods that keep pace with the times and existing conditions are in a flourishing condition.

If we read the scanty accounts on horse-breeding in the 17th Century correctly, we find that besides all the praiseworthy methods of selecting good sires and the grading of brood mares the feeding problem has been a fundamental one.

Referring again to Lichtenstein's accounts we find that the best studs were those where crops were raised and that undoubtedly extra feeds were supplied if they were required—which do not seem to have been the case of considering the extent of new and fresh pastures. Remarking on the studs in the South he mentions that "European grasses are cultivated with great success and especially does lucerne do well. Lucerne fields frequently yield eight cuttings during the season."

It may incidentally be mentioned here that this particular region has its rainy season during the winter months. It is a mild winter. Forage and good pastures abound and even during the summer months there is sufficient rainfall to keep the pastures and forage crops in good condition. The same conditions exist for the districts of Mantagu, Robertson and Caledon lying South East of the Cape Peninsula, and containing some very valuable studs.

The northern and north eastern districts and all the rest have their rainy season during the summer. They are semi-arid regions and the winter although a snowless one is fairly severe and the pastures are withered up and of poor nourishing value. Still these plateau regions with its dry air and rich lime formations are the best horse-breeding districts.

The northern studs in the Hantam district were situated along never failing brooks or fountains, the soils of which were rich and the grass very nourishing. The flat-topped hills also afford immunity to the horses during the season when "horse-sickness" prevails. With few exceptions these localities are the best horse-breeding districts. The stud "Grote Toorn" which was famous then and consisted of "over 300 breeding horses and some of the best English and Arabian Stallions," is still perhaps the most famous stud to-day. It is now owned by Sir Abe Bailey and some of South Africa's most famous runners are bred here.

The method in practice here and typical for all the other great breeders of this district which holds more of these rich farmers

than any other, are about the same as those practised by the farmers of more than a century ago, besides that greater attention is paid to the proper feeding of the young stock.

“Pure-bred stock is largely used and are well provided for by large lucerne fields. The troop of horses consist of 100 veld mares of colonial type—as much as possible on the lines of the old Hantam animal—and 50 Thoroughbreds. There are no less than six Thoroughbred stallions, among them are:

1. Leisure Hour of the St. Simon stock and a great asset to the stud. 2. Sidus (St. Simon—Star of Fortune by Hermit). 3. Perseus (Persimmin—Urania—Hanover—Wandah). 4. Abelard by Leisure Hour is South African bred. He is a bay and sixteen hands high and the winner of numerous prizes.

The other two are of good pedigree and obtained at high prices and all are in excellent condition.

An extensive range of loose boxes are fitted up for the Thoroughbreds, while ranges upon ranges of sheds are available for the other home-bred mares and for the young stock. There is plenty of excellent grazing and lucerne for the young stock and brood mares.’<sup>19</sup>

With the exception of the number and standard of stallions the studs in this region—Colesbery district—are of the same style. The prime factor is the feeding of the young stock and the protection against extreme cold weather.

Another description of a stud with a century’s fame from the same source would not be out of place here. It is the stud of Mr. van Zyl now owned by Mr. Schimpers. This farm was devoted to this purpose since 1819 when Mr. Louw was assigned it by Lord Charles Somerset and bought Sorcerer, the finest horse seen at the Cape up to that time.<sup>20</sup> He also brought Sir Hercules imported in utero and son of the great Irish horse Sir Hercules from the old Hantam and possessed between three and four hundred breeding stock. The van Zyl’s have been carrying on work here systematically since 1849 and for many years had few equals in all the settled parts. The name of van Zyl, Melck and Kotzè was for many decades the highest pedigree amongst farmers in their own and other districts and even in the old republics.

(19) *F. D. McDermott. Rural Cape Colony in Agricultural Journal of Cape of Good Hope Vol XXVII.*

(20) *Records of the Cape Colony No. 389.*



It was here that some of the most famous racers and winners of the day were bred. "It was here that Sir Amyas Leigh, Harkaway, St. Augustine, Champagne Charlie, War Eagle, and many horses of fame, pedigree and real merit have followed one another at stud through half a century and gave the racing world such cracks as Prosecutor, Debtor, Friendship and others. The progeny of the Arab "Damascus" increased the list with Robroy. Hantam Belle, Witkous and many more."

"The atmosphere of the old homestead is redolent of the Thoroughbred. How could it be otherwise when in the entrance hall one of the first things that catches the eye among a fine collection of horns, heads and sporting trophies is the pastern of the famous "Champagne Charlie" the sire of Hard Cach, Evelyn Wood, and others whose names are written in the classic records of great performers."

These were the palmy days of racing in South Africa when with the importation of some of the best Thoroughbreds from England the Standard was a high one and the speed terrific. These days are gone and the horses too, but they are great records to live up to—to breed to. What has been done can be done again.

An encouraging feature is that the breeders in this greatest and best horse-breeding district are all aiming at reproducing the old Hantam type with improvements. "And it is gratifying to know," remarks Mr. McDermot in 1905 after an extensive survey of most of the studs in these localities, "that there is every prospect of the breed being revived as soon as suitable mares are available. It takes time only; with the introduction of such excellent blood into the district, the day should not be far off when the old glories are revived."

Other Thoroughbred studs exist in the Eastern districts. Most famous perhaps is that of Senator Charles Southey who bred Campfire II that went to show England that South Africa can breed Thoroughbreds equal to its own. At Holesowen Mr. Hilton Barber also keeps up an excellent stud with good blood stock both colonial and imported. Both the Transvaal Orange Free State studs breed from Thoroughbreds mainly. The Transvaal Turf Club is well provided for by the studs of several of the great mine owners and other wealthy men. The Hon. Wyndham and Mr. Charles Wood are very prominent breeders of great winners. And many excellent

runners and horses of great value are bred by Messrs. Schimpers, van der Merwe, Wessels and many other breeders in the Orange Free State. Both Sir John French and General Botha got their favorite chargers from Mr. van der Merwe's stud during the war and feats done by representatives of these studs are worth to be scrolled on the classic records of great horses; it is a great pity no fuller accounts are obtainable of the methods and registers of these studs as they would act as strong advertisements and incentives to breed on the best lines and produce the best.

Among other methods for the furtherence of horse-breeding may be mentioned the Government Studs, Experimental Stations and Agricultural Schools; all under the control of the Agricultural Department, which although on a smaller scale is firmly based on the lines of the Agricultural Department of the United States.<sup>21</sup>

The history of these institutions are like that of the country itself, subjected to continual change and frequently total obliteration; and it is impossible to give a continued account of them. With the decline of the general horse stock that began after 1860. the Thoroughbred fell into disuse for some time and Hackneys, Clevelands and Roadsters were imported by the Government and breeders and either stood at stud on some Government station or other, were leased to great breeders or sold to them.

The use of these breeds as sires with the light Cape mare soon fell into disuse and are now only used either in a first instalment crossing or as pure-breeds.

Government studs date back as early as 1804, when among others "some Hantam mares improved by crosses with imported English horses were purchased and Mr. van Reyneveld allowed the services of a handsome stallion gratis."<sup>22</sup>

The Stud or Government farm as it was called contained 25,308½ acres and was situated in the Malmesbury district. In 1823 it was still in existence and at the command of Lord Charles it was increased among others by two imported Thoroughbreds of good pedigree and high spirit. The fee for covering mares was six rixdollars. Since then we lose sight of this stud and it seems the Government farms were abandoned and the great horse breeders of those days: Cloete, van Reenen, van Zyl, Kotzé, van Breda,

(21) Compare Dr. William Macdonald *The Transvaal Agricultural Journal* Vol. IV.

(22) *Records of the Cape Colony* Vol. XV.

Reitz, Rogerson, Melck and others became the trustees for the upkeep of a high standard and improvement of the breed, which reached its highest point in the fifties of the last century.

It is impossible to give a full survey of the various studs and the material used; but collectively they show that about 95 percent of the sires used are Thoroughbreds. Here and there Arabs are found and also Hackneys and Clevelands, but they are only used as first instalment sires in improved studs.

In the provinces of the Orange Free State and Transvaal the Government owns several excellent stud farms.

At Grootvlei in the Orange Free State there are 17 Thoroughbreds, four Arabs, one Shire and one half-breed. These stallions are leased out to the farmers during the breeding season. The farm also possesses a well selected troop of colonial mares and yearlings are sold at very low prices to farmers.<sup>23</sup>

The Transvaal Province possesses an excellent stud at Standerton, with 19 stallions of high pedigree. With the exception of two or three all are Thoroughbreds. They are leased to the farmers during the breeding season who eagerly apply for them. The manager, however, complains that there are still too many "weedy" sires about the country.

Referring to horse-breeding in the Orange Free State the First Annual Report of the Agricultural Department of the Colony in 1905 remarks that "Previous to 1904 no systematic organization existed, although much has been done in the development and improvement of various farm animals by importation from England and elsewhere."

"Several farmers and breeders have kept private records and practised the introduction of fresh blood from over sea from time to time, so that several really pure-bred strains were to be found although not in recognized Stock Registers. All these men recognized that the Boer Horse, Afrikander Cattle and Cape sheep were indigenous and of pure type and worthy of improvement and perpetuation. The wonderful ability of these breeds is characteristically emphasized in the Afrikander ox—large, heavy, and of beautiful conformation, rich bay color (red) maintaining good condition in severest droughts and capable of just keeping up a living and

(23) *First Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture of the Orange River Colony 1904-5.*



growing in good seasons, It matures at 5-6 years and will turn the scale at 1000 lbs. and over.

These remarks on the only indigenous breed of cattle may be expounded on at great length, for they show what can be achieved by breeding for a definite purpose and intelligent selection. The Afrikander cattle are pure-bred to-day and possess excellent qualities—foremost being extraordinary hardiness together with comparatively great scale and weight and of singular beauty of symmetry.

The methods used in the production of this excellent breed of cattle have, however, not been followed with the same fixedness of purpose in horse-breeding. There were undoubtedly definite aims in the methods of the farmers up to 1870 for until then their stock was of oriental blood and their sires either Thoroughbreds or Arabs, but as we have seen, these were later substituted by Hackneys, Clevelands and even "Holsteins and Cart-horse" sires; and with the results of these we are already familiar. Thus although there would seem no difficulty to know which sires would be the best we find, however, a great diversity of opinion on this matter. This may be owing to the desire of some breeders to produce a heavier type for general work; heavier than the Thoroughbred and yet not as heavy as the draft breeds and still possess the hardiness and other good qualities of the Cape Horse. This ideal has not been realized as yet and somehow or other it seemed a failure for most of the breeders have reverted to the Thoroughbred and others have taken to breeding pure-bred draft horses.

At the Robertson Agricultural Show in 1905, Dr. Hutcheon after remarking on the great improvement in the entries for horses and the excellence of the number of stallions of various breeds went on to say that: "It is a delicate matter to give definite advice to farmers which stallion to use. It is a generally recognized fact in breeding that the symmetry, quality and general conformation of the progeny follow the sire more than the dam, more especially when the sire is a pure-bred (which should always be) and the dam is not. It is therefore a matter of serious consideration for breeders whether the stallions in the land are the right ones for begetting the class of horses they should aim at. Energy and enterprise are not wanting. Some of the sires used cost their owners high prices. But it is evident, judging by the great variety of type and character of

stallion which is represented at our shows that there is a lack of definiteness in the minds of those that have imported them.”<sup>24</sup>

Turning to sources relating to the question of selecting a sire we find that the best authorities are all agreed that the right type of Thoroughbred is the best sire for mating with the best type of Cape mare. There are others, however, backed by some of the best breeders who think differently. Nunn holds that “if money were no object and the ideal type of Thoroughbred could be obtained he would use nothing else but the Thoroughbred; but as it is a consideration he would get an animal with size, power, bone and substance and as much breeding as can be afforded, but would not sink all other considerations on pedigree which has unfortunately too often been done.”<sup>25</sup>

Rattray in quoting Montgomery Martin in the *Racing Calendar* of 1885, remarks that “as regards sires, the experience of the breeders of the world has proved that nothing beats the Thoroughbred. The Thoroughbred used in England for the begetting of hunters should be used for the begetting of good remounts from the Cape mare. He should be strong enough to carry sixteen stone over any country and his stoutness should have been proved by the usual test of his having carried heavy weights to victory over a trying course. At this time—1885—we possessed several stallions coming up to this standard, they were: Buxton, Elf King, Fire King, Catalpa, Harkaway. They were all Thoroughbreds of great weight, high pedigree and they have proved their good mettle on the race course; but their type is too seldom met with throughout the land.”

On the selection of brood mares this authority remarks: There are thousands of mares suited for breeding remounts from. The average price is £15—a price that will be trebled at Horncastle or any other great English fair.

Only those mares of at least three infusions of imported Thoroughbred blood in their veins should be taken. They should be 15 hands high, possess a large barrel, strong back, long and broad quarters, muscular thighs, large boned hocks, well set back shoulder, strong fore arms and plenty of bone below the knee—7½ inches girth being the minimum. Smaller mares should be mated with

(24) *Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope* No. 3, Vol. XXVI, 1905.

(25) *Army Veterinary Department. J. A. Nunn. Reports on the Horse Supply of South Africa.*

Roadsters and their fillies when crossed with the Thoroughbreds would produce the exact article wanted. Nunn also holds that "there would not be the slightest danger of introducing three parts bred sires; for whatever the bad qualities may be, the Cape mare cannot be said to be wanting in breeding—on the contrary there is generally too much of it." He proceeds to discuss the various half bred sires which may do as a good first instalment for second-class mares, serving their fillies to the right type of Thoroughbred.

Clevelands: Good upstanding Clevelands would be good sires if the right type is selected; but they are often inclined to be long in the barrel, slack ribbed-up and to run to leg; avoiding such points a good Cleveland should produce fine harness horses when mated to selected Cape mares. Some ten years ago and earlier, Clevelands were great favorites; but their reputation seemed to have been the result of a boom for they fell into disfavor as quickly. only to come up again some time later; they seem to have served their time in South Africa and as a first instalment stallion he is to-day only used as a last resource. His progeny are often too long in the leg and long in the barrel, and somehow or other they will not trot over the same distance with such comparative ease as would the sons of other half bred sires; it seems, however, that the mistake lies more in the selection of both the sire and dam. Mr. Robertson a very successful breeder of thoroughbred stock in Colesberg district remarks that "Cleveland bays are absolutely useless—out here they seem to lose all character and being a long loose built animal, his faults are intensified in his progeny."<sup>26</sup> Another breeder Mr. Schimpers of the famous Hanglip stud of over half a century's fame also used Clevelands once but has taken to Thoroughbreds once more; although he thinks that as first instalment sires they did very well.

Norfolk Trotter: He is often a cross with a cart mare and the greatest care should be used to get a clean-limbed, pure-bred animal. He is cheaper than a good Thoroughbred, or even a first class Hackney and if well chosen he would do well as a first instalment. Hackneys, Oldenburghs, Ostfriesians and breeds of that type both in breeding and size will probably make the best sires for grading and developing the average brood mare for breeding excellent remounts and carriage horses; they have generally, when some care is taken,

(26) *Agricultural Journal of the Cape Colony Vol. XXVI.*



all the required bone, substance and size that the majority of Cape mares lack.

Clydesdales, Shires, Percherons and their type of heavy breeds should not be used indiscriminately as a crossing on light Cape mares as has unluckily and unwisely been done in the past, in order to improve the size in the Cape Horse. It is breeding with a vengeance; there should be at least some affinity in sire and dam and extreme unions should be approached gradually.

Once the choice of a stallion for a particular troop of brood mares is decided upon; the stallion, when owned by the breeder, should receive, besides good food and grooming also good exercise; he will beget better stock and the possibility of becoming impotent will be avoided, which is a misfortune that may result if a stallion becomes too fat owing to a lack of proper exercise—one of the famous Hambletonians being a case in point.

A private stud book used giving full particulars of every mare and its offspring and the stallions they were served to will be of very great help and elucidate matters when breeding for a particular purpose when selecting or grading mares for a certain sire.

It is encouraging to know that most of these methods are practised by some breeders scattered over the various Provinces; but we cannot impress too much their general adoption on every farmer who keeps a few brood mares—and very few there are who do not.

Once things are done with better method on a system that is seasoned with experience and intelligent observation and formers breed with a definite purpose there is no doubt but that horse-breeding can grow into a great and profitable industry and a source of wealth to the country at large, even if we do not export a single one.

“A prosperous community”—and the average South African farmer in comparison with his average brother on the Continent, Great Britain and America is certainly very prosperous—“requires good horses, so that the demand for good horses will always increase.”<sup>27</sup>

---

(27) *Dr. Hutcheon, Chief Veterinary Surgeon to the Cape Government in Report of Select Committee on Horse Breeding in the Colony Archives 1891.*

## CHAPTER III.

### THE CAPE HORSE

#### (a) CHARACTERISTICS.

The Cape Horse passes under many names. English writers often refer to him as the Colonial, the South African, the Cape and the Boer horse. German writers also use these synonymous terms and the same may be said of Dutch (Holland) writers. The South African farmer really has no particular name for the best type of Cape Horse, but speaks of a "well-bred horse", or adds the name of the breeder as a pedigree, as a van Zyl's, Melck's, Kotze's or Hantam horse. The cob of no reliable breeding is called a "Bossie Kop."

It would be best to adopt the name Cape Horse, for under this name South African bred horses have gained a high reputation far beyond our shores. The light horse found to-day from the Cape to the Zambezi, possesses Thoroughbred or Oriental blood in some measure and with varying type may easily be brought under the collective name of Cape Horse.

In 1906 Mr. C. G. Lee, chairman of the South African Stud Book Association remarks that "The question of establishing a breed of South African horses has had much consideration by breeders interested in the South African Stud Book. The Transvaal breeders have given the subject as much thought as any and a standard limiting the size of the horse they wish to breed has been drawn up. This standard fixing the height at 14.2 hands was submitted to the Central Committee of the South African Stud Book and was accepted under the name of the "Boer Horse."<sup>1</sup>

The Transvaal and Orange Free State breeders have many breeders who could breed this type for its excellent characteristics.

The Cape and Natal breeders are desirous of producing a larger animal than that fixed by the Transvaal. Mr. Lee objects to the name "Boer Horse." He argues that since this horse owed much of its virtues to the Thoroughbred blood in its veins it never was and never can be a "Boer Horse".

(1) *Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope*, Vol. XXVIII, 1906.

To my mind no other name is more appropriate and it is only for the sake of uniformity that I would suggest the name Cape Horse for the light South African bred horse. Mr. Lee is probably laboring under the impression that "Boer Horse" designates the mongrel type of horse in South Africa—this type is called the "Kaffir horse," which is, through careless breeding and bad keeping a miserable animal and in spite of his original descent from Oriental and English blood is to-day the "misera plebs" of the horse tribe; luckily, however, there are not too many of them and have next to no influence on the horse stock in general."<sup>2</sup>

The Cape Horse certainly owes much to the Thoroughbred; but as we know from previous chapters the foundation stock rests on very pure Oriental strains. The first colonists under the Dutch rule who took up farming were called "Boeren" (farmers). They took up horse-breeding as early as 1665 and we know that their horses were of a splendid type even before the importation of Thoroughbreds and should they have chosen to call their breed of horses "The Boer Horse" nothing would be more natural and appropriate. Sir Robert Wright on South African live stock remarks: "the 'Boer Horse' and 'Basuto Pony' are native types and 13.2-14 hands high, stout in build and rounded in frame. The predominant colour is bay or brown. They are very hardy, possess much 'staying power' and capable of doing much saddle work and light cart work on coarse fodder and in comparison with their size carry heavy weights."<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Lee covered up his sweeping statement by saying that "the whole question of registration of horses is so beset with difficulties that it might be left alone until the Stud Book is in a stronger position and those responsible for it had a little more experience."

A systematic and scientific discussion of the characteristics of the Cape Horse is well nigh impossible. Up to the present the breed has not been thoroughly established and with the exception of a few private registers no reliable records exist.

Accounts of the Cape Horse since 1652 are frequently interspersed with every variety of description in a very casual way.

The old Archives and Records of the Cape of those days make frequent mention of "beautiful stallions" and useful "little ani-

(2) Graf C. G. von Wrangel "*Die Rassen des Pferdes*" 1908.

(3) Prof. R. Patrick Wright "*The Standard Cyclopedia of Modern Agriculture and Rural Economy* 1911.

mals." They were of Oriental strains and these horses were never over 14.2 hands high; even the illustrious founders of the Thoroughbred stock were not over 14 hands, although some credit them with 15 and more.<sup>4</sup> Thus for the first century and a half the Cape Horse certainly was not higher than 14.2 hands high and possessed as has been proved before the characteristics of his Oriental ancestors in a very high degree.

As early as 1796 horses were exported to India and were the first horses to carry British cavalry to success in that country. These importations were continued and from various accounts we find that he was not a beauty, and his good qualities were discredited on this score. In 1838 Major Havelock's Cape horses were condemned as unfit and undersized yet their staying power and general "good doing" under all trying conditions of the most trying campaigns in foreign lands—the sun-scorched plains of India and the Crimean snows—they maintained their good character, was unsurpassed as a remount and gained that excellent reputation based on the principle of the old adage "handsome is as handsome does."

The first expert description of the Cape Horse is given by Lt. Col. Richardson in 1845. The average remount was described as a compact, well-knit, well-joined and shortlegged animal. Bay was the prevalent color and the average height was 14.3 36/133 hands. He was quiet, steady and good tempered in the ranks, sound in constitution and by no means predisposed to disease of any kind. The average sick was infinitely smaller than in a like number in England."<sup>5</sup>

During the Indian Mutiny, 1854, England got all her horses from South Africa and these are still spoken of by cavalry officers as "the finest lot of horses ever imported into India. They stood the climate much better than any other (Australian and Arabs); they were hardier, worked to a more advanced age and were unsurpassed as cavalry horses."<sup>6</sup>

Another expert report several years later and since a general deterioration has set in, is much less favorable. Veterinary Sur-

(4) Sir Walter Gilbey "Small Horses in Warfare" 1908.

(5) Papers relating to the purchase of Remounts at the Cape, etc., Bluebook 1845, etc..

(6) Report on the Horse Supply of South Africa...J. A. Nunn, Vet. Surgeon to Deputy Adjutant General Capetwon 1888.



geon Nunn describes the average amount then supplied as: "A small animal, stunted in growth and generally about 14.2-14.3 hands high, only few being much taller; deficient in bone, few if any measuring  $7\frac{3}{4}$  inches below the knee; pinned in at the elbows; good shoulders and forehead; narrow chest very badly coupled and ribbed up; with bad drooping quarters; badly developed muscles of the croup and thighs. In fact to sum up the whole matter: the South African remount is, although small, good before and bad behind the saddle." In the British Remount Report after the war<sup>s</sup> already made use of we find that although few good horses were then found yet they were the "best" and "unsurpassed."

Count C. G. Wrangel in his work "Die Rassen des Pferdes" published 1908 gives the following description of the Cape Horse: "The head is rather large but not clumsy; a fine slender neck; strong back and a strong, somewhat drooping croup; long and well placed shoulders with long forearm and short canons; of quiet temperament and extraordinary hardiness. He is an excellent light cavalry horse but not much good as a carriage horse. The height at the withers is 156-158 c. m. (15.2-16 hands). Quaddekker, the Dutch authority on the horse endorses these remarks and gives the Orange Free State Transvaal horses 2-4 extra centimeters.<sup>8</sup> These heights as we know are exceptional and cannot be taken as the general height of the Cape Horse.

More recently thousands of horses were exported to the neighboring German and Portuguese Colonies, Germany alone buying over 9000 animals. The German account of these animals is not at all flattering. An eminent farmer in an excellent book on "Farming in German South West Africa" writes the following: "They show characteristics which according to home ideas would be condemned as bad faults. Drooping hind quarters, sheep-necked and cow-hocked, and a too straight shoulder are frequent mistakes; but these are more often merely beauty faults brought about by adaptation to veld conditions. On the other hand, they possess many good qualities that amply make up for minor mistakes. The 'Afrikaner' horse is certainly an ideal type to breed from as foundation stock and should not be judged on his outward appearance but rather on his inherent qualities. Since we want useful and not

(7) *Report on the Horse Supply of South Africa...* J. A. Nunn, Vet. Surgeon to Deputy Adjutant General Capetown 1888.

(8) H. C. L. Quaddekker "Het Paarden Boek" Amsterdam 1912.

showy horses we cannot use better material." This criticism is quite true in part, but a great deal of it as effecting the general stock at that time can be explained away. The Natal Agricultural Journal (1906) remarks that: "those buying for these colonies did not want a high class animal, but the effect of their purchases on the market was to send up the value of the higher class animals."

There is no doubt but that the farmers in South Africa got rid of a large amount of the inferior stock imported from the Argentine and aimed at getting a better foundation and this explains why the price of the higher class of animals rose at once.

It has been remarked before that the Cape Horse possesses in a full measure some of the highest qualities of his Oriental ancestors and Thoroughbred sires. A few individual cases taken at random may suffice to emphasize this.

Referring to Veterinary Nunn's account and looking on the bright side of things he writes: "Of the strength and endurance of the South African horses there is no question. They being capable of performing immensely long journeys over very hard roads, in hot weather and on nothing but what they can pick up on the veldt or a little oat hay forage. They are wonderfully good tempered and quiet. They are as a rule very sound, splints are the most common form of lameness when it appears. Spavins and ringbones being comparatively rare. The hoofs are remarkably sound, and a good many persons working their horses for long distances over rough country without shoes."<sup>9</sup>

Mr. R. Bromley speaking of thirty years experience pays a fitting tribute to the Cape Horse and his splendid qualities of general efficiency: "I never had a lame horse, except for accident, nor a spavined leg or lame shoulder, and I kept from two to five horses for over thirty years and travelled at one time eight months in the year at an average pace of six miles an hour and forty miles per day when travelling and never stayed on the road once on account of a sick horse. One bay entire—a cross-breed Arab—I worked for fourteen years on long journeys and sold him for £5 more than I paid for him (for an easy job). He is now twenty-five years old and still fit and well and won two competitions at the Rose Bank Show this year (1906). For long distance travelling, a nice quiet

---

(9) J. A. Nunn, *Vet Surgeon 1st class. Report on the Horse Supply in South Africa, Feb. 1888.*

mount to shoot off or a good ride for a lady, where can you equal the old Cape Horse?"<sup>10</sup>

The gait of the Cape Horse under the saddle has been influenced much by the nature of his duties. "In order to hold a rifle comfortably or even ranch up cattle at not too hard a pace all the horses are taught to amble or "tripple" as the pace is called in Dutch."<sup>11</sup> Captain Hayes is not quite correct here, a good "trippler" is very rare, the most common pace is called "pass" which is a fast shuffling walk, which is as often called "strijkstap." The canter with several variations is the next common gait. The "three beat" canter can be kept up for hours. To quote Dr. Wegner: "men and women are continually seen riding their horses—Boer ponies or Thoroughbreds at a 'three beat' canter (Dreischlag)."<sup>12</sup>

Horses are very seldom trotted under the saddle, in fact it is looked upon as an unnatural gait in riding horses. The canter varied with the shuffling walk is the usual gait and with an average good horse forty miles per day can be covered with ease on indifferent feed and be kept up for months without being knocked up. This is the testimony of every horseman who has used a Cape Horse either at home or in those parts of the world where he was imported as a remount or pleasure and sport mount.

#### (b) RACING CAPABILITIES.

The Cape Horse being a light type of horse lent itself to the royal sport of racing very readily.

Racing might have been indulged in by the great horse-breeder before the 19th Century but we have no reliable records of it. This sport came with the second and more general importation of Thoroughbreds in 1811 and afterwards. Since then, the sport has lived through various vicissitudes—falling into disgrace through one decade it comes forward once more as that sport and test of quality which places its principles so much higher than any other based upon individual opinion of one or more judges. There the winning post with blind absolute justice is the judge and its decree is irrefutable; neither fashion nor fancy, neither favor nor hatred,

(10) *Agricultural Journal of Cape of Good Hope* Vol. XXVIII 26.

(11) Captain M. H. Hayes F. R. C. V. S. "Among Horses in South Africa," 1900.

(12) Dr. O. Wegner "Zur Kenntniss der Südafrikanische Landwirtschaft 1906.

neither prejudice nor deceit have biassed its decision in hotly contested struggles as recorded in the Racing Calendar for over two centuries.

It is this sport that has given the English Thoroughbred a value for breeding purposes unequalled and looked for in vain in any other equine species in the world.<sup>13</sup>

Referring to the earliest records of racing in South Africa we find that the South African Turf Club was founded in 1818 and that a Merchant's Plate of 500 rixdollars was the highest stakes on the race-list. This later on fell into abeyance and was re-established into a Challenge Cup of varying value. A Merchant's Cup was established later and after changing hands for twenty-five years it was decided in 1860 that the winner should stick it together with surplus subscriptions.<sup>14</sup>

Turning to the Annals of the South African Turf Club we find singularly enough that Lord Charles Somerset, Governor of Cape Colony engaged in four private matches of 1000 dollars each, every one of which he had the misfortune to lose.

"The Cape Turf", says an eminent contemporary racing authority of those days in the Cape Monthly, "never flourished perhaps more vigorously than when Farmer John, John Raw, Jester, Don Juan, Legislator, Scud, Red Rover, etc.—imported and home-bred Thoroughbreds—were tracking each other about from 1832-5. The timing of these days has never been equalled since, which may be attributed to so many first class horses coming out together and making the pace terrific from start to finish. This does not say that racers of equal capacity have not since been bred at the Cape. On the contrary, many might be named that have shown extraordinary merits; but as they never met antagonists of corresponding calibre, their speed and endurance could never be satisfactorily ascertained.

At the Autumn, 1835 Race Meeting of the Club, Don Juan and Farmer John ran 3 heats of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles each in 2.54 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 2.54 and 2.55 minutes. Turning up the English Derby race records we find the time for the same distance since 1900-11 varying from 2.45  $\frac{4}{5}$ -2.35  $\frac{1}{5}$ .

Several of the Cape Horses exported to India gained great

---

(13) Compare Count George Lehndorf "*Horsebreeding Recollections*" 1898 Berlin.

(14) *Cape Monthly* 1819, Vol. IX.



reputation on the Race Course. Mention has already been made of Battledore and Sir Benjamin "carrying everything before them."

"The best Cape Horse seen in India was Tumbler, carrying 11 stone, he beat Francisca the fast racer on the Calcutta Course carrying 10 stone with great ease on a  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile course in 32 seconds. This was astonishing considering the weight on a little horse of 14.3 hands."<sup>15</sup> With the general decline of the horse stock after 1860 the Turf suffered badly, and the Club annals ascribe the decline to the "suicidal mania" that infected many breeders to breed from Holstein and Cart-horse sires."

In 1882 matters have bettered themselves and the Jockey Club of South Africa was established at Port Elizabeth and was removed to Johannesburg in 1904. It has local branches in all the principal cities of the provinces. Numerous valuable stakes are offered; Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town all offer handicap purses of £1000 each.<sup>16</sup> In 1884 the Derby value at Port Elizabeth was £400 for South African bred three-year-olds. A contemporary authority remarks: "Many a colt competing for this will compare favourably with the best horses in England. In 1884 another Derby worth £750 (the most valuable ever offered up to then) was established at Kimberley."<sup>17 and 18.</sup>

Some records of the March, 1914 meeting of the South African Club at Kenilworth, Capetown in connection with the Rosebank Show give the time as follows:

7 Furlongs 1.32  $\frac{2}{5}$  M for 3 year olds.

1 $\frac{1}{4}$  miles 2.11 M for Lower weights.

1 mile 1.3  $\frac{1}{5}$  M for Higher weights.

7 Furlongs 1.32 M for Lower weights.

9 Furlongs 1.33  $\frac{1}{5}$  M Pony and Galloway Handicap.

5 Furlongs 1.3  $\frac{4}{5}$  M for Middle weight Handicap.

5 Furlongs 1.3  $\frac{2}{5}$  M for Higher weight Handicap.<sup>19</sup>

These races give a general idea of racing matters and the time is by no means the best for although the various heats were well represented still the highest purse was only £150 and the best runners were not entered. The American time for the years 1900-11

(15) *Eastern Racing Calendar. Reprint in Cape Monthly Vol. IX.*

(16) *The Farmer's Weekly, Oct, 1913.*

(17 and 18) *Grey Rattray in Racing Calendar 1885 and British Association for the Advancement of Science (The Transvaal, 1905).*

(19) *S. A. Turf Club. Weekly Cape Times and Farmer's Record. March 6, 1914.*

over a  $1\frac{1}{4}$  milss course is given as varying from 2.03 to 2.10  $\frac{2}{5}$  and the time of an ordinary meeting as the above mentioned one with a time record of 2.11 for  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles compares very favorably indeed.<sup>20</sup>

South African Race Horse owners have off and on sent some of their winners to England and in 1906 Campfire II, bred by Senator Charles Southey and owned by Sir Abe Bailey, won the Derby and other important matches and now stands at Stud in England at a high fee and his progeny is constant among winners.

"The 'great game' in order to flourish requires to be managed by men who are independent of it either for their recreation or whose proclivity and love of fair play are above suspicion." Racing in South Africa has fine future though a somewhat ignoble past."<sup>21</sup>

Captain Hayes' conditions are more than fulfilled. Since 1900 more and more of the wealthy mine owners took to horse-breeding and the South African Turf Club is at present in a most flourishing condition.

The last part of his remark refers to the days when the "sweepings of Tattersall's stables" found their way to the Cape and almost everyone wanted to own a race horse. Even earlier, although the race course was patronized by the great breeders by entering their horses, very few, however, graced it with their presence. In 1882 we find that "an extraordinary custom prevails here of an owner entering his horses in an assumed name as if it is a disgrace to a gentleman to be the acknowledged proprietor of a race horse."<sup>22</sup> At this period and very largely to-day the best horse-breeders were of Dutch extraction and the Dutch Reformed Church being very orthodox regarded racing as a "game of chance" and therefore, contrary to the church's laws.

The absence of the majority of the best breeders naturally lessened the spirit of fair play and the strict observance of the rules of the course; betting and its attendant evils, unjust handicapping and other underhand dealings gave racing a bad repute. To-day adequate laws govern all matters pertaining to the race course and gentlemen breeders and horsemen are at the head of affairs. There are purses for various types of runners and the turf is undoubtedly still a very high test of the ability and stamina of the individuals bred and entered by the different breeders.

(20) *M. W. Harper. Management and Breeding of Horses 1913.*

(21) *Captain M. W. Hayes "Among Horses in South Africa 1900.*

(22) *William Wilberforce "State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822."* London 1823.

### (c) DISEASE.

Although South Africa is looked upon by many as the incubator of all kinds of animal pests, still she is one of the healthiest pastoral countries of the world. She imported almost all her stock diseases and their prolificacy is due to the scientific fact that the diseases that are dormant and comparatively harmless in one country may become an epidemic pest in the other.

The Cape Horse as learned from previous pages is a very healthy and sound animal. The testimony of the highest veterinary authorities at home and of the British Army as already stated are all agreed that bodily the average Cape Horse is one of the soundest types and that he is fit for service to a great age.<sup>23</sup>

In a land of "eternal sunshine" he spends almost all his life in the open. With little variations the climate is temperate and the air extremely dry. With the exception of a narrow coastal strip all the rest of South Africa consists of high plateaus with a mean summer temperature of 62° or about the same as that of the Riviera which is 61°. The nights are always cool and refreshes again what has been exhausted during the day and the continuous heat of Bombay, Madras and even New York which is so exhaustive is unknown in South Africa.<sup>24</sup>

Several infectious diseases as Glanders, Mange and Equine Piroplasmosis (Biliary Fever) and several lesser ones have been imported, ignorantly and unwillingly of course, toward the end of the last century, but have never caused great loss or serious trouble. The most dreaded disease is Horse-sickness. It made its first appearance in 1719, sixty-seven years after the first horse was imported. Why it has been in abeyance so long puzzled many scientific investigators since the indigenous species of the genus *Equus* harboured the disease, but was immune to its attacks.<sup>25</sup> This is, however, easily explained by the fact that 1719 was the date the pastoral boundaries first extended into the disease infested area—the region all below the mountain ranges is still free from horse-sickness, or to be more correct all that region that has winter and late autumn rains. The disease generally makes its appearance after the heavy

(23) *See Veterinary Reports in Papers Relating to Purchase of Horses for Service in India. Bluebooks Capetown 1845-1888, etc.*

(24) *Sir James Bryce "Impressions of South Africa," 1898.*

(25) *Cf. Science in South Africa. Dr. W. Flint and Dr. J. O. F. Gilchrist 1905.*

summer rains, followed by heat and unusual heavy dews. For a long time the dews and mists were looked upon as having a direct bearing on the disease and horses were kept on high plateaus during those months. After the first frosts have fallen the danger is past.<sup>26</sup>

Towards the middle of the last century it was pointed out by experts that the disease was closely related to Anthrax; but Dr. Edington has the honor of pointing out that it is a disease sui generis and that it can be transmitted to horses by subcutaneous inoculation with the blood of an animal that died of the disease.

Towards the close of the last century Lt. Col. Walkins-Pitchford definitely proved the theory that the disease was caused by the bites of nocturnal insects; and also succeeded by tracing the insect to be the Anopholes Mosquito.

In 1903 the Chief of the Veterinary Department, Dr. now Sir. Arnold Theiler first succeeded in getting a preventive inoculation whereby mules can be rendered immune against an attack of Horse-sickness. This method was first introduced in the Transvaal in 1911 and no breeder was allowed to have more than two horses inoculated.

Out of 445 horses inoculated during that time 46 died or 10.3%. This result fully justified a continuation of the method and the next season the death rate was 11.1% in a very severe season when even "salted"\* horses died.<sup>28</sup>

The immunization of mules is now in its eighth year. During 1913 out of some 1522 mules that were inoculated only 42 or 2.8 percent died. Up to the present time 22,000 have been treated with an average mortality of about 3%. With horses the method has not been quite so successful; but it has decreased the mortality immensely.<sup>29</sup>

As soon as this monster disease is held in check or totally stamped out, the future of horse-breeding will be brighter than ever for with a very adequately equipped veterinary department all other diseases are kept within reasonable limits.

---

(26) Same as 25 and Records of Cape Colony No. 389.

(27) Dr. C. Edington "South African Horse-Sickness" XIII, 1900. *The Journal of Comparative Pathology and Therapeutics*.

(\*) A "Salted" Horse is one that has recovered from an attack of Horse-Sickness and was supposed to be immune to future attacks.

(28) Dr. A. Theiler "Report of the Transvaal Department of Agriculture 1903-4.

(29) *Agricultural Journal of the Union of South Africa* 1913, Vol. VI.



#### (d) DISTRIBUTION.

From the previous chapters it would be learned that the Cape Horse found his entrance into very distant parts of the world; but these importations would not strictly fall under the head of distribution as we hereby generally understand the use of any breed of animals for breeding purposes. And yet it is quite probable that some of the imported remounts were also used at Studs.

In roughly reviewing the several exports of horses from South Africa we find that the first exportation dates back to 1769, when a shipment left for Madras. Since then at various times thousands of horses went to India up to the middle of last century.<sup>30</sup>

In 1810, Australia imported her first horses from South Africa and repeated the undertaking in 1825 with better selected animals.<sup>31</sup> A civil servant of high standing writes in 1821 that "many of the best bred horses had been sent to Mauritius and India in 1821 and the sport (Racing) slackened; but the increase of young horses bred from English horses caused a greater interest."

"The export of horses to Mauritius (and probably other eastern countries) in 1821 amounted to 300,000 Rixdollars and that which appeared to have been undertaken for the gratification of hunting or racing has become a substantial source of profit to the breeders, the farmer and the shipper."<sup>32</sup> To quote another authority on this lucrative exportation to the East:

"During this period the Cape Horse was sufficiently attractive to provoke the admiration of the lordly but debilitated Indian Nabobs, who at this period flocked in large numbers to the Cape, then highly esteemed as a health resort, and many horses were taken to India as hacks or chargers by the recuperated health-seekers. For these the Nabobs, who were always lavish in dispensing the golden mohurs paid very high prices and they being the best of their class and able to stand the Indian climate much better than the English Thoroughbred horse, soon attracted the attention of the Indian authorities to the advantages of the Cape as a field for procuring mounts from and in 1835 a small trade was opened up which bade fair promise of yearly increasing in magnitude."<sup>33</sup>

(30) *Geo. McCall Theal "History of South Africa."*

*Grey Rattray. Reprint in Agriculture of Cape of Good Hope 1904.*

(31) *Records of the Cape Colony Vol. XXVI.*

(32) *William Wilberforce "A State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822."*

(33) *Reprint from "Racing Calendar" of 1885 in Agriculture Journal of the Cape of Good Hope Vol. XXXIII.*

The great Trek of 1836-38 and the subsequent establishing of the old republics extended the distribution of the Cape Horse over these provinces and for over thirty years the breed of horses were cut off from fresh blood; yet the selection must have been of a high standard for the Orange Free State type of horse was an all round better animal on the average than the one bred in the Colony. Many of the Thoroughbred stallions imported from England found their way here and Cape Colony farmers were even restricted selling them to the farmers of the neighboring states.<sup>34</sup>

The same may be said of the province of Natal. The first Thoroughbred imported there was Mortimer by Fitz Allen, the sire of good breeding stock and forerunner of many excellent imported horses.

The neighboring German and Portuguese Colonies use the Cape Horse as foundation stock by preference,<sup>35</sup> being selected after almost every other European and South American breeds were given a fair trial.

All Southern Africa including the Protectorates and lands outside the Union and British East Africa, excepting perhaps the Tsetse fly stricken area may be taken as the home of the Cape Horse in varying type for the ground stock is always the same.

With the opening up of the rich interior of Central Africa and the advancement of Veterinary Science, the Cape Horse has a great future, for of all breeds he is undoubtedly the hardiest and healthiest, and if he is better than the Thoroughbred and Gulf Arab in the trying Indian climate he is the only horse that has a chance in the future development of the twilight continent of Africa and a chance to win laurels of fame as high as those of the illustrious ancient stock from which he springs—the Libyan of North Africa.

---

(34) *Memorandum. Blue Book 1858.*

(35) *Dr. O. Wegner "Zur Kenntniss der Südafrikanische Landwirtschaft 1906."*

## CHAPTER IV.

### (a) VARIOUS TYPES OF CAPE HORSE.

South African horse-breeding extends over two and a half centuries. Its history of development is intimately bound with that of the country. Both have passed through many vicissitudes. Both were subjected to outside influences, both harmful and beneficial.

Running through the chapter on its origin and development we see that several strains of blood mingle in the veins of the Cape Horse.

These strains up to the last decade of last century were with negligible exceptions of Oriental and Thoroughbred blood; but certainly varied among themselves. It is difficult to write with some authority on this most interesting phase of the Cape Horse when there is absolutely no reliable information to be obtained from stock registers or private stud books, although some of the latter exist with the great breeders scattered all over the land. The first South African Stud Book for the various breeds of farm animals was only published in 1907 and is as yet in its infancy and very elementary as far as the registration of the Cape Horse is concerned.

It is clear that a country cannot do with just one breed of horses. Only to a limited extent can one expect the same breed to supply carriage, riding and racing horses; but this seems to have been the general trend of mind—breeding for a “general purpose.”

It is a well known fact that one stallion and his progeny have frequently been mainly responsible in the establishing of a new breed. This is true in the case of the Hackney, the Standardbred Horse, the American Saddle Horse and even the Thoroughbred with the illustrious Trio, and many others. These founders of course were pure-bred and the foundation stock of comparative good quality, and by further selection with a definite aim the breed was introduced; often within half a century.

The American Saddle Horse is a triumph of breeding for a definite purpose and the breed was established in a comparatively short time although the foundation stock was of longer standing.<sup>36</sup>

(36) *M. W. Harper. Management and Breeding of Horses 1913.*

The only distinct type of Cape Horse that was produced were the famous "Cape Greys" bred by Mr. Melck, they being the progeny of the Spanish stallions captured in 1807. They seem to have been heavier than the average Cape Horse of the time and more adapted for driving than riding.<sup>37</sup> Melck's stud had a great name and many of his stud's representatives were found all through the land. The type has never been established as a breed; but the great dapple-greys still met with here and there are certainly still descendants of these Spanish stallions.

Frequent mention has been made of the van Zijls', Oosthuizen's and Hantamer horses; but although there certainly was a difference in the type we have no reliable information what the points of variation were. With the unfortunate neglect of horse-breeding and the more disastrous effects of the Anglo-Boer war these types passed away before they were firmly established. To-day every effort is being made to breed on the lines of the old type and some of the Colesberg breeders are so fortunate as still to own some of the old Hantam mares.

In 1811 and afterwards some of the best Thoroughbreds imported to the Cape found their way to these studs. Mr. Oosthuizen owned War Eagle, Turpin and Evenus. Turpin later went to the Orange Free State and then into Natal. Mr. Louw owned Sir Hercules, and Sorcerer. Mr. Van Zijl owned Sir Hercules (Louw's), Champagne Charlie and Sir Amyas Leigh—horses that were on a par with any of those that crown the genealogical trees of other breeds.<sup>38</sup> The foundation stock was as we have seen from the first chapter mostly of Oriental strains, with the exception perhaps of the five stud horses from Boston, U. S. A., in 1872 and several stallions from England in the same year.

Up to the beginning of last century, almost a century and a half, Oriental blood has been the dominant one; since then the Thoroughbred reigned for half a century, when a period of Hackneys, Clevelands, Roadsters and even Cart Horse sires in 1890 and after.

The Hackneys found greatest favor in the Western Province of the Cape Colony. The Melek and Kotzé studs in Malmesbury

(37) *Henrich Lichtenstein "Reisen in Südlichen Afrika 1798-1806, Berlin 1811. Live Stock Journal No. 2 "Light Horses"—Breeds and Management. London 1907.*

(38) *Compare. Graf C. G. Wrangel "Die Rassen der Pferdes" Stuttgart 1909.*



are still breeding from Hackneys and turn out a serviceable driving horse. Several studs in the Montagu, Robertson and Caledon districts possess high class Hackneys and their horses are of excellent quality. With a few other exceptions all the other breeders have taken to the Thoroughbred once more. The foundation stock in all these studs consists mainly of Cape mares. Very splendid types existed in pre-war days and it is a very great pity we do not possess reliable descriptions of them and of the sires used in their foundation. Since the war we have been busy rehabilitating our horse stock, still the matter is not definitely settled yet, except by those who breed for the race course. It would be of great practical advantage if a collective account could be made of our horse material and find out just what is wanted and what lines should be followed, and are being followed throughout the country.

#### (b) THE BASUTO PONY.

Basutoland was first occupied and settled by Chaka in the beginning of the 19th Century when it was temporarily occupied by roving bands of natives. The Basuto nation was only unified in 1828 under Moshesh.<sup>39</sup> These facts do away with the idea that the Basuto Pony may have originated from the shetland ponies stolen from British officers and crossed with native mares procured originally from the East Coast and brought down by the Arabs. Horses were not known to the natives in those regions at any time before the 19th Century... The first horse seen in Zululand was taken there by Chief Dingiswayo from the Cape Colony towards the beginning of last Century.<sup>40</sup>

Mr. S. Barrett, Assistant Commissioner in Basutoland writes in "The Field" of July, 1901 that "The Shetland pony origin of the Basuto Pony is a myth. The first Shetland Pony imported to South Africa, was owned by Mr. Carwood Grahamstown and as much as we know it was never stolen by the Basutos. From talks with the oldest Chiefs and missionaries I find the Shetland Pony theory generally discredited."

The first horses owned by the Basutos were taken from marauding hordes of Koranna who raided the country when the late Chief Letsie was a young man—probably 1830-35. The Rev. M. Cassalis,

(39) See *McCall Theal's History of South Africa*.

(40) *J. W. Bowker. Racing Calendar 1901.*

French Protestant Missionary relates how proud Letsie was of his accomplishment of riding bare back on a horse stolen from the emigrant farmers of that period.

It is quite probable that Basutos were in possession of horses long before that date; for cattle and horse thefts were a great annoyance to the frontier farmers all through the 18th Century. During the last decade of that century over 300 horses along with thousands of cattle and sheep were stolen and taken into the mountains of Basutoland and neighborhood.<sup>41</sup> The Basuto conquered these hordes and occupied and settled Basutoland and some of these horses must have been among the spoils.

The neighboring territory now the Orange Free State was first occupied in 1838 by the emigrants from the Cape Colony. Basutos were largely employed as farm hands and were paid in stock and speculators exchanged large droves of horses for slaughter stock with the Basutos who were very anxious to possess horses. They were a sporting race and many well-bred stallions have found their way into the country. "Representatives of Tormmentor (by Wild Dayrell), Sir Amyas Leigh (Adventurer), Bellandrum (Stockwell) and many others are to be traced in the hands of the natives crossed with the old Dutch (Cape) breed obtained from the farmers."<sup>42</sup>

Owing to the severity of the winter in this mountainous country—the Thermometer often indicating 10°–15° of frost in the valleys and plateaus, while the peaks are snow covered—the progeny of these horses while retaining many of the valuable qualities of their progenitors and improving in hardiness became more and more stunted in size and gradually developed in the famous Basuto Pony.<sup>43</sup>

The Basuto pony is somewhat thickest with a rather long body on short strong legs and extremely hard hoofs combining extraordinary secure footing and comparative high speed.

"Of the endurance and activity of these animals I cannot speak too highly. They seldom or ever get anything more than they can pick up on the Veldt and yet they commonly do journeys of 60–80 miles in the day and this with carrying 13–14 stone. They are wonderfully sound and are seldom if ever shod, although some of

(41) G. E. Cory. *The Rise of South Africa* 1913.

(42) S. Barrett "The Field" July, 1901.

(43) J. W. Bowker "Racing Calendar" 1901.

the tracks are very stoney and rough. They run loose on the mountains and are not caught till seven or eight years old, their ages being reckoned from the date they begin to work. It really does not much matter if these ponies are aged as they will work for years. A peculiarity I noticed is that the marks of the teeth between six and eight years show them younger than they really are, the teeth being worn down, being attributable to the quantity of sand taken in with the rough herbage."<sup>44</sup> This peculiarity is common to most of the South African horses that are bred on the veld and in the dry plateaux regions.

During the latter part of last century a number of so-called Basuto Ponies have been successful in Johannesburg and other racing centers, but most of them can be traced directly or indirectly to the Orange Free State. Pious Peter sold for £500 in Johannesburg, was bred in the Orange Free State; so was Bafar and Soldaat, the fastest pony in Basutoland at that time.

Scottie, another star of the Course is a son of Honesty, a well-known racer in the Orange Free State and a son of Champagne Charlie.<sup>45</sup>

Basutoland should be a first rate horse breeding country, lying as it does at an even elevation of some four to five thousand feet above the sea, with a temperate climate in which Horse-sickness is unknown. Droughts are seldom and the pastures although rough are very good.

Basuto Ponies are famous all through South Africa and as Polo Ponies they have quite a fame in India. The Army Remount Report while placing the average South African cob as "unsurpassable" placed the Basuto Pony as the "best". He can be bred with very little expense and valuable as they are they very seldom fetch high prices. The Basuto often will not sell and in barter his price will rarely exceed £8 or £10.

The best horse experts are agreed that the Basuto Pony has sufficient individuality to be classed as a distinct type.<sup>46</sup>

Too little is known of the Namaqua Pony to give it a special heading, yet a few remarks will well merit this hardy type of pony that has silently been in the make for many years.

(44) J. A. Nunn "*Reports on Horse Supply of South Africa 1883.*"

(45) J. W. Bowker "*Racing Calendar July, 1901.*"

Compare Captain McCall's report in *Cape Monthly* 1865.

(46) J. M. Christy A. P. V. S. *Transvaal Agricultural Journal.* 1908.

The large arid regions of the North West Cape Colony comprising Namaqualand and the districts of Kenhardt and Prieska, some 30,000 square miles, possess large numbers of excellent ponies, and now and then we hear of their extraordinary powers of traveling through waterless parts for several days subsisting on the scantiest fare as offered by the few withered yet succulent shrubs, tough dune-grass and water melons.

Great irrigation schemes are being undertaken in those regions and some are already well established. The districts are becoming more settled and it will therefore be of great value and assistance to the settlers and older established farmers if this excellent type of horses could be improved. The Cape Mounted Police on the borders and in Bechuanaland use Camels at great expense<sup>47</sup> and seeing that the water holes are not too far distant from one another there is no reason why these sturdy ponies will not be a success were they procurable in sufficient numbers.

Such an undertaking will be a step in the right direction and there is no doubt that a few well selected Arab stallions will have the desired effect.

#### (c) WHAT TYPE TO BREED.

The South African war once more called the best attention to the Cape Horse, not only at home but in other parts of the world. His real merit in competition with almost every other breed clearly asserted itself. Since then some of the best writers on the horse have devoted at least some remarks on the Cape Horse in their books and contributions to periodicals.<sup>48</sup>

As remarked before, the question of registration of horses is beset with many difficulties. Several excellent but undefined, unpedigreed or rather unregistered types existed showing the undecidedness in the minds of the people breeding these types; and even to-day there is a great diversity in the ideals of the great breeders, but since the Thoroughbred is mainly used and since the breeding stock is brought up to the standard of the Hantam type of the forties it seems that matters are pointing to the production of a type as near the Thoroughbred of compactness as possible, with special adaptation to South African conditions.

(47) *Estimates and Expenditures Bluebooks 1911.*

(48) *Sir Walter Gilbey, Count C. E. Wrangel, Quaddekker and others.*



Sir Alfred Pease in his article "Breeds of Horses Suitable to South Africa"<sup>49</sup> urges the breeders to make up their minds what classes of horses they desire to breed and possess. "Whatever types we select we require them constitutionally hardy and sound, with good legs and feet, capable of resisting the variations of cold and heat and of thriving on either the Low or High veld pastures." There is no doubt that Sir Alfred had in mind the glories won by the Cape Horse in India and the Crimea under the most oppositely extreme climates when he wrote this article and continues that "it appears that there are two different stamps that are specially in demand.

Firstly, a horse of handy size for riding and military purposes about 15 hands high (14.2-3) high, with the greatest combination of quality and strength obtainable and possessing the utmost resistance to the attacks of Horse sickness and other diseases and equal to sustained exertion on such forage as the country produces. This type of horse will also be adaptable to light harness work.

Secondly: A horse fitted for the heavy traffic of towns and for agricultural purposes. This class must possess similar qualities in regard to climate, food and resistance to disease as the first mentioned type but in addition must have weight and great muscular development.

In producing the first type Sir Alfred covers the same ground as before mentioned. The sires should be of the oldest established breeds and the mares graded on lines of best conformation and blood.

He, however, gives preference to the Arab as a sire on the plea that he will find a second home in South Africa and his progeny will be hardier than those of the Thoroughbred. The Arab and his types were used largely in the production both of the Thoroughbred and the old Cape Horse, and if the right type is secured he would be the best possible sire for South African conditions.

The second type will be more difficult to produce and perhaps it will be best to breed mules for heavy draft and agricultural purposes. "Breeds like the Clydesdales, Shires and others will never do in South Africa; heavy carcasses, thick coats, hairy legs, apart from other considerations, are not suitable either for rainy seasons or hot climates." Percherons might do better, but something

(49) *Transvaal Agricultural Journal Vol. II, 1904.*

lighter still will do best, such as the Hackneys, Oldenburgs and their class.

Where the Cleveland, Hackney and Roadster sire is recommended for the breeding of this heavier type, all experts are careful to modify them very much and always want his progeny to be crossed with "a well selected short coupled Thoroughbred of from 15.2 to 15.3 to get stamina and blood and in the case where Arabs were used as first insalment stallions to get substance and size for horses of the first type.

Mr. Barter a pioneer horse breeder in Natal and speaking of almost half a century's experience, maintains that Natal is a fit home for the Thoroughbred and certainly less adapted to the coarser equine breeds during the summer heat and scorching winds.

He advocates the breeding of light horses from the Thoroughbred and from these select the types best suited for driving and riding. In breeding for draft purposes the aim should be to make compactness of form, symmetry, sound limbs and feet, supple action supply the absence of weight and bulk.<sup>50</sup>

In reviewing what has been said on this matter one frequently finds that the breeding for "general purpose" is widely advocated; but it has never obtained the whole-hearted approval of the best authorities.

Dr. Hutcheon in 1905 admits that horses for general purposes can be bred in large numbers in other stock districts where they are left to take their chances on the veld, and the breeders can afford to sell at a price the breeders in the district requiring extra feed can not. But holds that horses of fine symmetry and quality cannot be produced on the veld where they are at the mercy of all the vicissitudes of weather and drought. Any well-matched pair of such horses, which were fed through foal-hood and possess quality and symmetry together with the good qualities of hardiness and stamina can always command their own price in the Colony whereas those of the mob must sell for what is offered and frequently have no offers at all.

Barter very emphatically maintains that breeding for general purposes means breeding for no purpose whatever. In a previous chapter we have made use of this authority's views on carriage and driving horses, it may just be mentioned here that he bred from

(50) *Natal Agricultural Journal Vol. VII, 1904.*

Thoroughbred sires only; but by a method of very strict selection he produced both driving and carriage horses which even the best breeders in England would have been proud to possess; and he was intimately acquainted with horse breeding in England.

From a previous chapter we know that sires of other breeds were used in grading up the breeding stock and in fact were also used to replace the Thoroughbred after the importation of the "blood weeds" in 1860 and after. Most of the best horse experts are of the opinion that these sires caused a further deterioration of our horse stock. But under the circumstances it seemed the best remedy and the best breeders and experts advised the use of Hackneys, Cleveland and Roadsters with many restrictions but always maintaining that if "the right type of Thoroughbred could be found he would be the best."

These cross-breeds although they gained in size and stoutness were lacking in many good qualities possessed by the Cape Horse bred from Thoroughbred sires and mares with Thoroughbred blood in their veins. An eminent authority holds that "Hackneys, Cleveland and Flemish horses spoiled our horse stock. The cross-breeds would not pull a light buggy fifty miles along an ordinary road during a day and bring you back the next day and if they did, how many splints, curbs and other ailments would be the result, or given a regiment mounted on such chargers, would they ever under forced marching orders do what  $\frac{3}{4}$  bred Thoroughbreds and Arabs would do?"<sup>51</sup>

Reflecting on the outcome of the South African war these remarks which will be endorsed by the majority of farmers go to show that cross-breeds other than from Thoroughbred sires or well selected Cape Horse sires are an undesired class and when light coach breeds and other than Thoroughbreds are used as sires they should be selected with great caution.

The effects of using heavy breeds such as Cart Horse and Shires to give bone and substance to our brood mares were naturally worse than those of the above mentioned lighter breeds. Mr. Barter, Natal's greatest horse breeder, called it "breeding with a vengeance," and other breeders have called this procedure a "suicidal mania." To serve a 14.2-3  $\frac{3}{4}$  Thoroughbred mare out of Oriental stock to a Clydesdale, Percheron or Shire or mares of these

(51) *Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope Vol. XXXIII.*

to a Thoroughbred seems a bad procedure, except under extreme restrictions and with careful selection.

Yet such methods are still practised by some farmers and even looked upon favorably by men who are closely connected with our live stock breeding.

It is most embarrassing to find that the General Manager of the Standerton farm, speaking of Percherons and Clydesdales remarks that "the introduction of these heavier breeds will be productive of a great deal of good as bone and substance are very much lacking in our brood mares";<sup>52</sup> while the General Secretary for Agriculture remarks that "one of the most noticeable developments in connection with live stock is the interest taken in Hackneys and the heavier breed of horses like Oldenburgs, Clydesdales, Suffolks and Percherons. This is welcomed, both on account of their value for draft purposes and for providing heavy mares for mule breeding, and for mating with Thoroughbreds in order to obtain the general purpose horse which plays so prominent a part in all countries.

Occasionally two or three horses are now seen employed in ploughing or other work upon the land and there is little doubt the use of heavy horses for farm work will become more general."<sup>53</sup> The occasional appearance of two or three heavy horses plowing is certainly noticeable not so much for their excellency but for their rareness, the number employed in this way are few and far between in the Transvaal and much less in the Orange Free State. The quick, hardy Cape bred mule is most commonly used and the ox is as largely employed in these provinces. But granting that the Clydesdale may do as a useful animal for heavy draft purposes he and his class will never do in cross-breeding with the Cape mare or in the making of any breed that will do best for South African conditions. There are several horse breeders in the Cape Colony who breed heavy horses only and find a ready market in the great towns; but in those districts where farming is most extensive the mule and "general purpose" horse (a cross-bred Cape and Thoroughbred) are used exclusively; and although more are required to do the work which less of the heavier breeds will do, yet they are hardier and healthier, require less care, are quicker and more useful all round.

(52) *Appendix XXXVI. Department of Agriculture Report and Appendices 1913.*

(53) *Annual Report. Department of Agriculture Report and Appendices 1913.*



Continued and unintelligent cross-breeding has been the ruin of our horse stock and it is high time to realize that only by a system of strict selection can we ultimately establish the breed and class of horse that will best suit our requirements and our climate. Infusions of fresh blood will only be of advantage from allied strains, such as the Thoroughbred and the Arab; from these almost every breed of horses has been produced by selection, but to cross breed any of these very different breeds (draft and light) to-day, except those of very close affinity, would show the utmost disregard of the elementary principles of breeding.

General Sir John Watson reviewing all the literature on horse breeding in India and speaking with great experience comes to the conclusion that "to create an Anglo-Indian type of horse capable of reproducing itself can never succeed; the endeavor has been persevered in for a century, has failed and will fail; for we are fighting against nature and nature will beat us in the long run. Climate and the prevailing normal conditions of life are paramount in determining what the size and character of the horse of any country shall be."<sup>54</sup>

The India Horse Breeding Commission of 1900 making an extensive survey of the horse material finds that "the most important point that invites attention is the existence of several breeds of horses which are pure and in the Commission's judgment they are well worth preserving. These breeds are now being improved under conditions as nature designed them, and without the admixture of Thoroughbred blood which has proved, during recent years at all events, of very doubtful advantage. Economy and efficiency alike point to the wisdom of turning over a new leaf altogether and discarding the use of alien sires other than Arabs of the best breed."

The remark on the Thoroughbred as a sire has long been shared in South Africa and experts have always been careful to lay restrictions on him and to speak of the "right type of Thoroughbred" always meaning compactness, stoutness, great weight-carrying power and all such points as would distinguish him from the mere racer or "blood weed."

The enlarged structure of the Thoroughbred is an acquired one—artificially bred into him—and in the endeavors of this, sight was lost of the other imported qualities and to-day we know that increased height certainly does not involve increased strength in all

(54) Sir Walter Gilbey "*Horse Breeding in England and India*" 1906.

directions as great weight-carrying powers, endurance and hardiness. Considering the existing conditions of the country it would seem that they demand a horse bred as close to the natural conditions of the country as possible. By careful selection of well-bred native sires and of Arabs and Thoroughbreds we will be able to increase size and substance while it will be possible to preserve the valuable qualities of the native bred dam. These qualities: the hardiness, robustness of constitution, sureness of foot, ability to thrive on poor feed are the natural outcome of conditions under which the Cape Horse has been bred through centuries and to preserve them in the young stock it will be necessary to rear the cross-bred foals under conditions as nearly natural as their constitution will allow. These conditions will vary for the several provinces to some extent; but common and necessary ones will be the combination of great freedom with plenty available shelter and food. To stable and feed them artificially would encourage undue physical development while undermining that capacity for endurance and hardship which has been once the greatest points in favor of the Cape Horse.

It is true that we import over eighty percent of heavy draft horses for the cities and even the importation of mules is very high; but this does not justify the indiscriminate cross-breeding of heavy sires with Cape Mares. The breeding of draft breeds for the cities should be encouraged, and is also being done, but they should be kept pure, or bred to exceptionally heavy Cape mares.

Heavy breeds will not do for the farmers who are twenty and more miles away from the railway station; a light team trots there and back and for the reasons already mentioned—health, speed, less feed, endurance, etc.—this team is worth double the value of the best team of heavies.

The importation of mules is still a remainder of the many irregularities caused by the war; the stock of brood mares was mainly employed for increasing the number of horses and as soon as the main necessities are supplied others will receive their due regard.

The type of horse that will be of the greatest value to the country as would be the case in any other country is the native breed improved into such types as the various needs of the country demands. This type will be produced most effectively by selection and the adherence to the natural conditions of the country and not by continued cross-breeding and artificial conditions.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE HORSE IN SOUTH AFRICAN FARMING.

The acquisition of the horse by the first colonists has been one of the chief factors in the rise and supremacy of the white race in South Africa; yet he has never been of such direct economical value as his brother in other countries. In the agricultural development of the country he has not yet come to his own; the ox, the mule and also the ass have been mainly used for transport, and agricultural purposes, their popularity and quantity varying with the degree of agricultural intensity and economic factors in the various portions of the Union. Mules are more abundantly used in the grain district around the Cape Peninsula, and in the agricultural districts of the Eastern Cape Colony, whereas the ox and more recently the ass are mostly used in the interior and Natal. It is for economical reasons that the horse was never put to greater utility in agriculture. South Africa is by nature a pastoral country first. The large herds of cattle up to recently, after supplying the market with beef still furnished a large amount of oxen. So with the exception of those small localities where crops are grown more extensively, all cultivation and transport are done by teams of oxen. The team of oxen requires less handling, no stabling nor extra feed.

Most of the plowing is done after the summer rains have fallen and the pastures are full. A good and well trained team of 12 or 16 large Africanders in good condition and managed by only two average farm hands walks at a good pace and with a double or three share plough they turn over a fine piece of land in a day. The horse or mule will do more; but not so economically in the semi-arid regions with summer rains only whereas the opposite may be said of the ox in the regions of greater agricultural intensity and these compared with the domain of the ox is fractional.

In 1896 and for some time after when the Rinderpest carried off almost 50% of the cattle of all the country north of the Cape Colony the horse received better recognition; but he was up against

great odds, he could not, hardy as he is, work under the same conditions as the yet harder Africander ox, he could not do the same amount of work on veld feed and owing to the undeveloped condition of the agricultural resources no sufficient extra feed could be supplied. The muel and ox largely filled the place of the ox.

The problem of feeding is the greatest drawback that prevents the horse to be more generally used in Agriculture, and if he is given the same care and feed as the mule the farmers will not have one overworked team of mules or oxen and a troop of 30-100 mares and young horses running about useless.

Between the census of 1904-1911 Natal and Eastern Transvaal lost the greater part of their cattle through the ravages of East Coast fever; the decrease of cattle in Natal (1911) was 210.81 per cent. This gap was filled up mainly by asses and mules and the census returns show an increase of these of these animals of 250.81 percent for mules and 1,053.73 percent for asses. This increase was made by importation from abroad and from the neighboring provinces which show a decrease of almost 50% in the number of mules.<sup>1</sup> The importation of mules and the high prices are altogether out of harmony with the economics of animal husbandy. It is undoubtedly the result of the disasters caused by East Coast fever; but at the bottom of it all is the feeding problem and the general neglect to make better use of the troop of horses. The well-bred hardy Cape Horse will do the same amount of work given the same care and feed as the average Cape bred mule besides this the team of mares can refill the team many times over and the gelding can be put to infinitely more uses than the mule or ass—simple truths that are unhappily realized by too small a number of farmers, and they are worth considering since the breeding for beef is coming up very rapidly and the usual large and strong trek-ox will become scarcer while the slow ass will also disappear from the areas of greater agricultural development.

The horse population of the Union in 1911 is given as 719,414 and this number increases to 813,345 if mules are included. Of the almost 6,000,000 inhabitants, only about one and a quarter million are whites. Excluding the natives and other colored people and their live stock we find that each white person possesses:

.65 horse and mule, or .90 when asses are included; 2.66 cat-

---

(1) *Census Returns Live Stock—1911.*



tle; 15.62 pure-bred sheep or 21.47 with other sheep; 3.04 Angora goats or 5.69 with other goats; .67 ostriches.<sup>2</sup>

Comparing these figures with those of other great countries we find that the Union of South Africa has more than twice as many horses and mules as the United States, more than twenty times as many as France and more than twenty-four times as many as Germany per head of population. Yet it does not get half as much value of its horse stock as these great countries do, where almost all their agricultural wealth rests on the horse.

The Union possesses more than half the number of horses, mules and asses on the continent of Africa which do not number two million fully while the Union figures are given as more than 1,140,000.

The natives are agriculturists mainly; that is they produce only as much as they need for food until the next season and if the crops fail owing to droughts or other catastrophes they are dependent on the whites. The percentage proportion of the live-stock owned by the whites and natives as follows:<sup>3</sup>

	Horses	Cattle	Pure bred sheep	Other sheep
Whites.....	78.27	57.37	88.94	84.08
Natives.....	21.73	42.63	11.06	15.92
	Pure bred Goats	Other Goats	Pigs	Ostriches
Whites.....	89.10	44.22	40.67	99.28
Natives.....	10.90	55.78	59.33	0.72

A statistical survey of the past centuries is impossible in a country that has been and is still continually expanding. Taking leaps of about a century we find that each person in the Cape Colony possessed in

1690— .26 horse, 53.52 sheep, 4.74 cattle.

1796—2.17 horses, 66.44 sheep, 11.52 cattle.

1891—0.79 horse, 30.16 pure-bred sheep, 7.03 other sheep, 2.92 cattle.

These figures are of no value except to show the pastoral wealth towards the close of the 18th Century and remarked upon by Lichtenstein, Heitmann and many other explorers of that period. This wealth continued into the next century and we are already familiar with some of the achievements and catastrophes of that age—

(2) *Census Returns Live Stock—1911.*

(3) *Census Returns Live Stock—1911.*

the Indian trade in remounts, the numerous studs with excellent stock, and the importation of Thoroughbreds. The ultimate deterioration of the stock, the ravages of Horse-Sickness and the results of the great Trek and Kaffir wars explain the low figure for horses in 1891 when the periodical disease of Horse-Sickness passed like a huge wave of destruction over the country.

It is extremely difficult to trace the prices of horses during the centuries, for even the price for remounts are often not quoted and amongst the farmers a system of exchange or barter has been much in practise.

As mentioned before, the price paid for a horse at the first public sale of horses in 1665 was equal to that of four large oxen in prime condition. With the exception of the one quotation of a stallion costing 3000 Thaler we do not know the market value of an average horse in the 18th Century nor would it be correct to assume it comparatively with the stallion's price; but then perhaps more than now good, reliable and strong riding horses commanded fancy prices.

In 1796, the year horses were most numerous (2.17 for each person) the price for a remount was 80 rixdollars (£16 or \$80) and a superior quality fetched 100 rixdollars. At this period England held the Cape for Holland, an occupation that became permanent in 1806. The Records further remark that the value of all trade matters increased remarkably after the English occupation, and the price for horses increased from 60 to 150 rixdollars.<sup>4</sup>

During the twenties and thirties of last century horses bred from the excellent stallions imported by Lord Charles Somerset fetched very high prices. Mr. van Reenen sold mares at £113:13.6 and yearlings frequently fetched 1000 rixdollars and 3000, 3500 and more were paid for colts of exceptional promise.<sup>5\*</sup>

A decade later the price of remounts varied from £18-£33 in round figures. Those exported to India cost almost double that price when landed. A batch of horses exported to Bombay in 1849 costing on an average £33:2.6 were estimated to cost £63:10.6 inclusive of freight and other expenses of the voyage.<sup>6</sup> This price

(4) *General Craig to Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Dundas in Records of Cape Colony No. 406.*

(5) *Records of Cape Colony Vol. XXIII-XXVI.*

(\*) *It was the transition period for coinage and the dollar must still have had a value of 4 or 3½ shillings.*

(6) *Remount Agent Major J. Bower. Horse Supply for India—Annexures and Printed papers of House of Assembly 1858.*

was frequently much higher, especially when a smaller number were exported. The following list gives the number and value in 1857 and exported not as property of the government or East India Company:<sup>7</sup>

Madras, 11 horses £950; Bombay, 6 horses £300; Ceylon, 8 horses £340; Geelong, 1 horse £75; St. Helena, 16 horses £550; Mauritius, 349 horses £16699; Bourbon, 23 horses £690; Walfish Bay, 2 horses £20; Rio de Janeiro, 40 horses £1445.

The 5482 horses exported during the Indian Mutiny in 1758 were bought for the average price of £39:7. Both this and previous prices paid were much higher than that offered by the Remount Committee in 1845 for horses to be delivered at their depots in India for 600 rupees (£30) for horses; 550 rupees for geldings and 500 rupees for colts. As we know from previous remarks nothing came of these restrictions and they had to buy at colonial prices and export at their own risk, still they had their way ultimately and with the decline and subsequent fall of the trade we are already familiar.

In 1888 Veterinary surgeon Nunn made three very extensive tours through the best horse-breeding districts, including the lower parts of the Orange Free State and remarks that only a limited number of remounts could be obtained for heavy dragoons and medium cavalry, but in times of emergency especially if the standard was somewhat relaxed a certain number could be found suitable for light or irregular cavalry. The price of an average horse of this kind he estimated from £20 to £25; Cobs for mounted infantry £15 to £20; mules about £20. Horses fit for heavy cavalry would be hard to put a price on, there were but few and if required they would fetch fancy prices; but at a rough guess he placed them at £35.<sup>8</sup>

During the Herero war in German South West Africa (1904-7) Germany bought large numbers of horses in the Union. The averaged price paid was £28 and for second class animals this was very good.<sup>9</sup>

At the present time good horses always command their own prices, but they are few and never reach the market. The prices for horses at the Live Stock Market during 1913 varied from £19 to

(7) *Custom House. Cape Town 1858.*

(8) *Reports on the Horse Supply of South Africa. J. A. Nunn to Adjutant General in 1888.*

(9) *Natal Agricultural Journal 1906 and also Exports and Customs 1903-1911.*

£30.<sup>10</sup> The breeders of reputation possessing excellent stock and stallions cannot meet the demand for yearling colts which sell out from £50-£100. Mares are never for sale or at least very seldom and two-yearlings are as scarce. With breeders of heavier breeds near the cities things are different and they sell at serviceable ages.

South African bred Thoroughbreds generally fetch very high prices.

At the Rand Agricultural Show (Johannesburg) in April 1914, the sale of several South African bred Thoroughbred two-yearlings attracted great attention. Five hundred guineas was the top price for a half-brother to "Eiffel Tower" by Sarcelle; 500 guineas for "The Mede" by Sarcelle; "Niobe's" half-sister fetched 400 guineas and "Blanche" and "Sir Starr" each fetched 300 guineas.<sup>11</sup>

Although these prices are high they do not reach that paid for colts of great promise in the beginning of last century and are probably not of the same calibre, conformation and weight carrying powers. The sires of that period more generally combined great weight and compactness with speed than present day sires which have lost many good qualities in their attainment of greater size and speed.

It is a frequent remark that there are sufficient horses in South Africa but that their quality is not on a par with their quantity. Managers of stud farms, great breeders and experts all complain of "weedy" and undesirable sires and this circumstance has probably driven some men who ought to know better into the belief that crosses with heavy breeds will remedy matters; but the experience of the past, and of the best experts have proved the contrary. Economically no other horse will give a greater amount of general efficiency and usefulness than the Cape Horse—the type that is still met with occasionally and represents the ideal type of palmy Hantam days. He is a native of the land with the breath of the life-giving veld in his nostrils, the tenacity, health and power of the virgin soil of the pastures in his hoof, bone and tendon—an equal to any other equine quadruped in the world.

During seven years (1904-11) the Orange Free State Province has increased its horse stock 189.47 percent; Natal 13.57; Transvaal 72.61 and the Cape Colony 30.93. The Orange Free State possesses splendid horse breeding areas and some of the material used

(10) *Farmers Weekly* 1913.

(11) *Rand Daily Mail* 16 April, 1914.



is of a high class. It is a very hopeful sign that horses, not imported heavies, but quick, strong light-bred horses are becoming more common in agriculture. With better methods of management and breeding the Cape Horse will soon be a strong economical factor in the ever-widening agricultural development which is only just beginning. With our cattle bred for beef, the ass discarded for his slowness, and the heavy draft animal for his expense and unsuitability, the strong, shortlegged, bigbarreled and well-bred Cape Horse has every chance to become the foundation of our agriculture.

The economic value of the Cape Horse as a factor in war has been established beyond doubt. We are already familiar with his achievement in India, the Crimea, the many Kaffir wars, the Herero war and last but not least the Anglo-Boer War. His hardiness, surefootedness, willingness and capability of doing much work on scanty rations have gained for him a world-wide fame.

Sir Walter Gilbey in his "Small horses in Warfare" that was written during the Anglo-Boer War seems to have been inspired mainly by the experiences gained in that campaign where even with double teams of remounts, picked from every available spot on earth, the British forces could not overtake the Boers on their "ponies." "Their rapidity of movement has given us an important lesson in the military value of horses of that useful type which is suitable for light cavalry and mounted infantry. It was then proved beyond dispute that these small horses are both hardy and enduring, while owing to their possession like our English Thoroughbreds of a strong strain of Arab blood, they were speedy enough for light cavalry purposes."<sup>12</sup> The only objection to the Cape remount previously to the war was his size. He was judged by European standards and those standards were reached by artificial measures. In breeding for increased height, however plausible in certain breeds, the great importance of other valuable qualities are lost sight of. This fact was brought home in a very disastrous way and very soon the leggy or artificially increased horse was a hopeless failure against the smaller, speedier and hardier Cape Horse.

In this relentless prejudice of size lies the defeat of the British cavalry in South Africa. The larger horse of light breeds owes his increased size to artificial methods of production and under war conditions he cannot keep up with horses bred under natural conditions.

(12) "*Cape Horses*" in "*Small Horses in Warfare*". Sir Walter Gilbey 1900.

Speaking of the purchase of large numbers of horses in foreign countries by the remount agents—Sir Walter Gilbey remarks that “had the demand been made for ponies a very large proportion could have been cheaply and quickly been bought in England for their mode of life would have suited them very well for ‘roughing it’ in South Africa.” In peace time this type of horse will do more general farm work than his pampered brother of a hand or more higher.

For economic reasons this fact cannot be impressed on South African breeders too much; namely, that: increased structure and height does not imply increased utility in all directions. It is the general opinion to-day of every expert on the matter that the Thoroughbred with his increased height attained at the present time has lost in great measure the qualities possessed by his smaller ancestors.<sup>13</sup> Some of the best breeders of Arabs found no difficulty in grading them up a couple of inches; but they found that when this had been done the bigger horses were in no way better, stronger or stouter than Arabs of normal size.<sup>14</sup>

The experience of a great trainer of race horses favors small horses: “As a rule you may get fifty good small horses for one good large one and the smaller ones stick to the course longer than the large ones. A good big horse may beat a good small horse over a short course, but I think at three or four miles a good little one would beat the best big one I ever saw.” In forty years of experience he recalls only one good stallion above or about 16 hands—Stockwell—“Both for the race course and the stud the small horse is the best.”<sup>15</sup>

The experience of hunters, explorers, horsemen and campaigners will be unanimous in showing that small, compact, well-muscled horses between 13.2–14.2 hands high are those on which reliance can be placed for hard, continuous work on scanty food.

Sir Richard Green Price speaking of many years experience as a cavalry leader remarks that “small horses will beat moderate horses double their size and few of our present cavalry horses will live with them in a campaign—they are more easily taught, handled and mounted than bigger horses and with twice their constitution and thrice their sense.”<sup>16</sup>

(13) *Compare: Sir Walter Gilbey's Works.*

(14) *See Scawen Blunt in “Small Horses in Warfare”.*

(15) *William Day “The Race-Horse in Training.”*

(16) *Bailey's Magazine in “Small Horses in Warfare”.*

In these days of motor traffic the necessity of light cavalry of great mobility and endurance is of great strategic and economic importance. Cavalry movements can be accomplished with great rapidity unhampered by the usual heavy outfit of heavy cavalry which can be forwarded by motor lorries. In attack or retreat the small horse will generally serve the trooper best.

The economy for our breeders lies in the production of a horse that will give the maximum amount of usefulness with the minimum amount of cost of production. There are difficulties in the way in order to hit this "happy medium" and not the least will be the care and watchfulness that must be exercised between artificial life with its attendant evils of overgrowth, pampering, and the consequent delicacy of constitution which will minimize that capacity of endurance, which is so essential and the free natural existence, without a spare diet and reckless exposure to extremes of climate which will check the growth. This type of horse is most in demand under present existing conditions and will form the best foundation stock where an increase in height for other duties are necessary. To breed for increase in height without keeping up some artificial system or other to back up what has been attained by artificial means is to invite inefficiency and heavy mortality when such products are put to work under natural conditions; conditions under which the horse produced on lines best adapted to the country would thrive well.

"The sacrifice of useful qualities to the 'god of inches' is deplored only in so far as it applies to the average trooper," concludes Sir Walter; and with us it would apply to the general purpose horse as well. "The utility of large and powerful horses has never been questioned; but they can no more do the work or special tasks of ponies, hardened by natural conditions, than they can fly. For all-round farm work the well-bred, veld-hardened horse of 14.2 hands is unsurpassable."

With the eye on the future when the ox is bred for beef and the ass has become too slow and the mule not half so economic as the good horse, these remarks well merit the best attention of breeders throughout the Union.

## CONCLUSIONS.

That the Cape Horse is not recognized as a breed of its own, need not reflect to the discredit of the stock; for a breed of live stock is not of itself an end, but a means to an end. That end is the yielding of a product that will give the maximum value at a minimum cost,—to raise such animals as would be best fitted to the natural conditions of the country and would be most profitable under the conditions of rearing, feeding and selling which prevail in the particular locality. These were the aims of the founders of the Africander cattle and the Cape Horse. These “voortrekkers” achieved great success because they realized the particular needs of their time and produced such types and fixed such characters as these needs demanded.

Times change and evolution is continuous, both in our markets and in our systems of agriculture and stock raising. It is quite clear that we cannot cling to the standards of the founders of our live stock, however good they may have been in their own times and for their own needs. New standards and new types are necessary to cope with new demands. For this purpose no hard and fast rules can be laid down.

It is quite obvious that in South Africa with its several localities of different climate, vegetation and occupations, would require live stock of different qualities and standards.

These types will have many fundamental points in common and will vary only in dissimilar ideas of efficiency and suitability both as regards the nature of their uses and conditions of rearing them. This fact is only too well illustrated by the various breeds and types of farm animals in European countries. The farmers appear to have found what marketable articles they can produce especially well. In some cases it is early lambs, in others mature mutton or baby beef, or again it may be cereals, forage crops or vegetables. The recognition of these facts have been the cause of the production of the several types of farm animals, now perfected and established into distinct breeds. The maximum value at a minimum cost is the underlying principle here.

Since we cannot see too far ahead we are safest in setting our



standards fully abreast of the times and prepare ourselves to make such modifications as the future may necessitate.

The way to improvement of farm animals is only to be pursued by slow and studied steps and is a process of many methods which may be either highly beneficial or harmful.

Besides the fundamental forces underlying all breeding such as, heredity, variation and their attendant phases, there are others which are within the control of man and systematised into different systems of breeding. These systems will depend on the purpose and circumstances of the breeder. If he is a breeder of pure-bred stock his system and material will be different to that of a breeder of unimproved stock.

Grading is probably the most common system of breeding. It consists in the mating of unimproved animals with highly improved ones. Generally the improved animals are the sires and if they are the best of their breed improvement is rapid. A convincing example is the importation of a batch of high class stallions in 1811 and after by Lord Charles Somerset. The improvement was most remarkable, all the more so, since the mares also possessed very good breeding.

Cross-breeding is another system which consists in crossing individuals of different fixed breeds in the hope of combining desirable qualities of both parents and eliminating the undesirable characters. As often, however, the undesirable qualities are propagated in the off-spring and he is a nondescript product that will not breed true to the type—how could he for his parents were unlike.

In horse-breeding, cross-breeding is an uncertain undertaking although it has decided advantages in animals bred for the market. Cross-bred animals often have a vigor and robustness greater than either parent. These qualities give a considerable economy in the production of a market carcass.

Without going into further detail on the other systems of breeding such as in- and out-breeding it can safely be said that in establishing a type selection is an all-important factor. In a sense it is true that all breeding is entirely based upon the single principle of selection; if the selections are right the desired results must follow.

Some of our most experienced breeders have been most wary in expressing definite suggestions in improving our horse stock. The previous pages show that a great diversity of opinion exists on this matter.

It seems, however, that through the centuries our horse breeders have made use of grading mostly—they bred from improved and pure-bred stallions because their brood mares were not of a fixed breed although possessing some breeding.

In 1830–50 when South Africa furnished remounts to the British army in India, the type of horse that gained so much fame and that represented the highest stage of development of the Cape Horse was an improved grade from Cape mares with some of the best Thoroughbreds—a type of sire that is growing scarcer to-day and then was of superior muscular development and greater weight carrying powers as proved by the fact that several of the sires then imported were the sons of the sires—the Hark-aways, the Pretenders and the Bellfounders—which largely contributed to the foundation and establishment of the Hackney.

The Cape Horse owes his best qualities to the Arab and Thoroughbred; but even as the Arab of to-day is unable to impart or even possess many of the good qualities possessed by the breeds that are mainly indebted to him for what they are—the steed of the Thoroughbred, the additional qualities and size of the American Saddler and the weight of the Percheron—even so the Thoroughbred in his turn will also become useless for the breeds he has improved and established, except where he is selected with many restrictions as to weight-carrying powers, conformation and muscular development.

In view of all these difficulties the government and great breeders should come to adopt more definite and rigid measures as regards our horse breeding.

Great authorities from European and other countries, to name one, Mr. Alfred West, the great Irish judge, can not speak too highly of the wonderful opportunities as afforded by climate, pastures and other economic facilities of South Africa in producing a horse, and large numbers too, second to no other.

The future, now more than ever before, holds the greatest opportunities for us. The Cape to Cairo railway will bring us nearer the world's greatest markets and we know that we can produce better horses than India and Australia for we have everything in our favor.

We need have no fear, the best economists and stock raisers tell us, that motor traffic will ever make the horse useless. The

increase of population and wealth resulting from civilization and modern inventions all tend in the long run to increase the demand for good horses both for use and pleasure.

Glancing at the history of the various countries we find the horse stock has increased tremendously in spite of increasing motor traffic. The horse-stock of the United States—the nest of automobiles and motor lorries—is becoming more valuable year by year; it is more valuable now than either its herds of cattle or cereal crops and these are gigantic sources of wealth.

To regain the old and lost glories for our horses we must follow more rigid and definite lines. All non-descript stallions must be done away with, and others must be either subsidised or authorized by the government.

We must make absolutely sure to breed from first class stallions whether they be Thoroughbreds, Arabs or even Standard-bred and American Saddlers. The latter two breeds will give us as great satisfaction as any other and if our ancestors could import good sires from this country in small sailing vessels there is certainly no prohibitive difficulties to-day.

With good sires, intelligent grading and selection and an efficient government control we will soon have every great market of the world open to us and if we reproduce the famous Hantamer type of 1850 with certain improvements we need not fear any competition from any country.

These remarks refer to driving, riding and cavalry horses and are backed up by the greatest authorities. In breeding for draft purposes we seem to have greater difficulties. The best experts are convinced that the pure draft breed will never be quite a success in South Africa; but we can certainly produce a heavier animal for our agricultural needs and mainly to capture the market for draft animals in our own cities.

In the grading of our horse stock there are mares that are of a decided draft type. If these are bred to well-selected and not too heavy draft stallions we will get a fairly fine draft animal.

There is probably no better stallion for this purpose than the Percheron. Owing the larger amount of his blood to Oriental sires and being obtainable in three grades—light, medium and heavy with the same characters and breeding true to type—he should with careful selection be an ideal if not the best sire to breed with

our heavy mares and produce a good draft animal. Possessing all the good qualities of any other draft breed he has in addition better feet and his limbs and pasterns are free from coarse hair. His temperament too, is decidedly preferable to that of other draft breeds. He is by far the most desirable draft horse in the United States.

In breeding for draft purposes the aim should be to make compactness or form, symmetry, sound limbs and feet and supple action supply the want of weight and bulk.

In conclusion a few imperative hints to our horse-breeders in general will not be out of place here.

Grading with careful selection will establish the type that is aimed at. Even pure-bred animals of the same breed will vary in type. Study the brood mares—keep a Stock Register—and breed the mares to the stallions best suited to their type.

Quality is always better than quantity and economy better than extravagance. A few well-bred, well-fed colts are more valuable than a nondescript, half-starved mob. What a colt has lost during foalhood can never be regained—their mothers can help pay their keep and feed during foalhood by being worked moderately.

Be interested in the horse-world and live stock in general. Send your sons to one of the Agricultural Colleges even if it is for one term only. The Vacation or Special Courses will also be highly beneficial to older men—one never grows too old to learn.















ERNST MAYR LIBRARY



3 2044 110 362 985



